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LIFE AND WORKS OF THOMAS HARDY

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THE LIFE AND WORKS OF THOMAS HARDY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND BRIEF DISCUSSION OF HIS LIFE

Thomas Hardy, the man, his life, his early childhood and training and his works open such vistas and possibilities for study that it is difficult to decide upon what phase of his existence the most emphasis should be placed.

There has been a theory advanced that a great measure of his philosophy and attitude toward life was strongly influenced and found its first roots in his early childhood. His mother and his grandmother started his young mind along the path it was later to assume by the stories they had to tell of his ancestors, of the people and traditions surrounding him there on the lonely heath where he was born; that the heath itself and his contacts with these people, restrained somewhat by careful parents, cast a gloom on his young mind which deepened and spread as he grew into maturity and was never lifted during his entire life.

"His experiences throughout his life seem never to have modified to any considerable degree the underlying ideas with which he began to write".(1)

Beyond a doubt this theory is well founded as later circumstances prove, but there are others who do not attach so much importance to it. Some feel that his greatest influence comes from the classical writers such

(1) Life of Thomas Hardy, Ernest Brennecke, p. 144

as the Greek tragedians, particularly Aeschylus, of whom Hardy was a close disciple; or even some of the later philosophers, such as Schopenhauer.

There are many influences on a mind such as Hardy's, all of which help to develop the perfect form and beauty found in his novels and poetry, which reaches its culmination in The Dynasts, undoubtedly his greatest work.

It is my duty then to show in as unprejudiced a manner as possible, what these varying factors were and the extent of their influence.

Thomas Hardy was born June 2, 1840 at Upper Bockhampton, three miles north of Dorchester. His was a position above the natives of this community his father being descended from a somewhat illustrious and valiant line of Le Hardys, which had dwindled into nothing, but there still remained a spark of family pride. Hardy's mother was a well read, cultured woman of sturdy prejudiced English yeomanry who frowned on all that was rural and crude. Unfortunately there was little money in the family treasury so that the problem of educating Thomas was a great one. At the age of eight he became a pupil in the Dorchester primary school. He was extraordinarily quick in learning but as this was coupled with a certain physical sluggishness and diffidence, he made rather an idle school boy. Furthermore, a growing consciousness of his family's social position caused an uncomfortable shyness with his companions. At first, he had preferred the daily contacts with the people about him, skipping off to play games with his cronies, or stopping to talk with this person or that, but he gradually drew himself away, spiritually. But it was from these early contacts with the workmen and farm laborers and servants that he obtained impressions

that no civilizing influence could efface and that were strengthened constantly by the unenclosed wilds about him. He gradually became introspective and critical when he should have been losing all thought of himself in the excitement of the day. He was forced to develop a sense of detachment from the inferiority of his comrades and went on through childhood thus, alone, so to speak. "This determined and symbolized the mood of analytical detachment coupled with sympathetic appreciation and pity which was later on to characterize his whole artistic attitude." (1)

Hardy's father was a master builder, general builder for the community also one of the local musicians and it was thru him that Hardy inherited the extraordinary sensitivity to music which ever characterized him. He loved the endless jigs, hornpipes, reels, waltzes and country dances to which he , as a child, would dance as long as his father would play. Certain pieces would move him so that he would dance the harder to hide his tears.

Hardy's mother was ambitious in a literary way, indulging in the classical Latin poets, Virgil mainly, and French romances and tragedies, but due to her position she was somewhat superficial. However, the French influence encouraged his psychological imaginings and helped to develop the power of detaching himself from his problem and viewing it from afar, almost coldly.

His feeling for religion was first developed by his mother who chose the finest stories from the Bible, the sweetest parables and the more moral of the Mosaic episodes to read to him. The companions he met of his own

(1) Life of Thomas Hardy, Ernest Brennecke, p. 81

age instilled in him that queer pragmatic view of Scriptural authority peculiar to the Wessex mind.

And we must not forget to mention Hardy's grandmother who was a veritable storehouse of local stories and pictures. She, perhaps, was an even greater influence on Hardy than his mother as many of her tales and legends appear in his novels and poetry. She was of inestimable service in his efforts to recreate the swiftly vanishing color of the Dorset environment.

For a short time Hardy was tutored at home, first by his mother in Latin, then by a French governess. This proved ineffective and lasted for the short period of one year.

The ignorant villagers conducted their various business affairs by word of mouth; but often, the younger generation, especially, would turn to Hardy for the composition of their love letters. It afforded him a rare opportunity to study this type of human nature under the stress of emotion, a natural and subconscious mode of education. It increased his growing sympathy with the rustic heart and materially aided in developing his critical appreciation of the rustic mind.

At sixteen he began to be greatly interested in the French and Latin classics, when the question of a business or profession arose. He had no money to go to college, nor enough to travel, and work with the natives of the community was out of the question. As the only solution he became an apprentice to Mr. John Hicks, an architect. He met a young man there by the name of Bastow with whom he studied the Greek Testament and classics. About this time Hardy was beset by the problem of adult baptism, about

which no one could satisfy him as he possessed a breadth of mind which his superiors lacked. He began, however, to realize that Christianity did not hang on temporary details so this problem was gradually solved.

Bastow left before Hardy, and then Hardy's architectural duties became more exacting, and he dropped his literary pursuits for a time. In 1862 he was released from his bondage, went to London, and after some trouble became an assistant to Mr. Arthur Blomfield, an architect who wanted a young Gothic draughtsman. They developed a friendship which lasted until the death of Mr. Bloomfield. Hardy felt that architectural drawing in which the actual designing had no great part was monotonous and mechanical. He did not care to set up his own practice, though, owing to his poor financial condition, he would have been only too grateful for an offer for work. It was after he had definitely turned toward literary pursuits that he received, ironically enough, an excellent offer which meant little to him then.

About 1862 he began taking evening courses at King's College, from which he emerged with a fairly good academic attainment. Then he began his reading again with a growing tendency toward poetry, and by 1865 he had begun to write verses and was sending them to magazines. None of them was published and much later he made some changes in them.

He continued to write poetry but said nothing about it. For nearly two years he read nothing but poetry as he felt that "as in verse was concentrated the essence of all imaginative and emotional literature, to read verse and nothing else was the shortest way to the fountain-head of such

for one who had not a great deal of spare time." (1)

About 1868 he turned to prose possibly because of a short prose piece he had published called "How I Built Myself a House" and perhaps because he was somewhat in need of money.

The agitated period in which Hardy was living at this time, with its scientific and philosophical revolt, perhaps affected him more than we realize. The old was dead and the new had not yet found itself. Sentimentally Hardy felt for the old, but intellectually he agreed with the new. Whatever the cause, Hardy showed an ever increasing dislike of architecture and a growing desire to write. The lyrics he wrote at this time fully record his "spirit-searchings" and display a self-conscious but a natural art.

In the summer of 1867 Hardy was in such poor health and his spirits were so low that, to get away from the stifling city, he went back to Dorchester with Hicks. Within a few months he was completely restored but still beset by his usual problem. He really did not so much need a means of subsistence, having always his father's house to go back to in addition to his architectural duties, as he needed a clear call to him as to which course in life to take, either the course which he loved and which was his natural instinct, that of letters, or the course all practical wisdom dictated, that of architecture.

In 1867 he wrote The Poor Man and the Lady by the Poor Man and in 1868 he sent the manuscript to The Macmillan Company where it was given close attention but not accepted. He sent it to one or two other publishers, but

(1) Early Life of Thomas Hardy, Vol. I. Florence Emily Hardy, p 64.

none dared accept it. Among the readers of it were George Meredith and John Morley who gave a very encouraging criticism of it. Meredith was tremendously interested in it but felt it to be too dangerous, too satirical and too definite in the opinions expressed. He advised a more tempered expression and a greater development of the plot. The style was good, he said, and the whole thing seemed to show talent. Hardy had striven to imitate Defoe and had successfully achieved his simplicity. As a result of this interview Hardy began work on Desperate Remedies which, in his young ardor, he overdid, making it too melodramatic.

About this time he was sent on one of his last architectural duties. He went to St. Juliot near Boscastle in Cornwall to reconstruct a very lovely old church which had long been in a dilapidated condition. It was there he met Emily Lavinia Gifford who became his wife four years later.(1) They had much in common, and she was later of great assistance to him, even when they were apart, by copying or rewriting for him whenever she could.

Macmillan refused to publish Desperate Remedies as it was too sensational. Hardy finally found a publisher, and when the book came out it was at first quite well received, but when the current number of the Spectator appeared it literally damned the book.

Hardy was now really in need of money as he was engaged to be married to a young wman wo had not a cent more than he, if as much, so he set to work on Under the Greenwood Tree which he sold to the same publisher for a trifle. This story was kindly received by most reviewers though ignored by the Spectator. Then the editor asked Hardy for a three-volume book to run

(1) Early Years of Thomas Hardy Vol. I. F. E. Hardy, pp. 87-96

in his magazine, which Hardy agreed to give him, so he started A Pair of Blue Eyes which, when it was published, was kindly reviewed by the Spectator.

Leslie Stephen, an influential man of letters, wrote to Hardy asking him for a story for the Cornhill Magazine. Hardy started Far from the Madding Crowd. Before it was finished Leslie Stephen sent an urgent appeal for it right away, asking if Hardy could keep ahead of the monthly instalments. Hardy promised to do this and began writing furiously indoors and out. When he would occasionally find himself without paper at the very moment he felt most like writing, he would use large dead leaves, white chips left by the woodcutters or pieces of stone or slate that came to hand. He was able to keep the instalments up and finally published the book. It was so well reviewed that he received an immediate demand for another novel; so he tried a new tone in The Hand of Ethelberta.

In 1874 he went back to Cornwall and was married. Hardy and his wife found a house in Sevanage where he spent the fall and winter finishing The Hand of Ethelberta. Hardy was now definitely committed to novel writing and in a way it made him uneasy, as he hated the social life that inevitably went with it. He published at this time a ballad he had written nine or ten years earlier which had been rejected, called The Fire at Trantor Sweatley's or The Bride-night Fire. The Hand of Ethelberta was received in a friendly manner but not so well as the others had been.

The Hardys moved now to Yoevil where they played a while before taking a short trip to Holland and the Rhine. Back at Yoevil again they were not

quite satisfied and began looking around again for another home. They found a cottage at Sturminster Newton where they stayed for two years which proved to be perhaps the very happiest time of their life. It was here that Hardy wrote The Return of the Native, as well as some poetry. Later they moved to a London suburb and gradually worked back into the life of London again. When The Return of the Native was published the Times remarked that the reader found himself taken farther from "the madding crowd" than ever.

The next trip that Mr. and Mrs. Hardy took was to Normandy and Cambridge after which Hardy became very ill and was confined to his bed for months. It was imperative that he finish a novel he had promised Harper's for their first publication in London. He dictated A Laodicean to Mrs. Hardy.

Hardy felt that constant living in London tended to make his writing mechanical, therefore he and Mrs. Hardy planned to live in the country and spend a part of each year in London. They found temporary quarters at Wimborne where they stayed while Max Gate was being built, and on June 29,1885 they slept at Max Gate for the first time. Hardy was now quite resigned to novel writing as a trade and "went about the business quite mechanically".(1)

The Hardys took many trips about the British Isles and on the Continent while at Max Gate. In 1887 they went to Italy. Hardy liked the softness of Florence, hated the gauntness of Rome and found the most pleasure in Venice. In 1888 he wrote a short story for a magazine entitled A Tragedy of Two Ambitions. In 1889 he began work on Tess of the D'Urbervilles for

(1) Early Life of Thomas Hardy, Vol. I. F. E. Hardy, p. 239

which he had three serial requests, but the first two refused to publish it because of its immoral explicitness. Before he sent it to the third, therefore, he cut out the objectionable parts, which he restored in the final publication of the volume.

At the end of 1890 Hardy began reading the satirists a great dealsuch as Horace, Voltaire, Smollett, Byron and Carlyle.

After the publication of Tess of the D'Urbervilles Hardy's popularity as a novelist made him welcome anywhere. He was now allowed the privilege of meeting people of every rank and even found himself moving about in political circles. He also received many letters from people with secrets in their past asking his advice. He acknowledged their kindness in trusting him with a secret no one else knew but refused to give them any advice.

Tess of the D'Urbervilles was dramatized but not presented for a long time as the actors and managers were timid, though the actresses seemed willing enough.

In 1895 Hardy and Macbeth Raeburn, a very well known etcher of the time, went all over Wessex making sketches of the various places mentioned in his novels to be used as frontispieces for the Wessex novels.

When Jude the Obscure was published the onslaught was unequalled in violence since Swineburne's Poems and Ballads of thirty years before. Hardy even received a packet of ashes from one virtuous reader. "Hardy, with his quick sense of humor could not help seeing a ludicrous side to it all and was well enough aware that the evil complained of was what those nice minds with nasty ideas had read into his book, not what he had put there." (1)

(1) Later Years of Thomas Hardy, Vol. II. F. E. Hardy, p.39

The misrepresentations of Hardy of the last two or three years--influencing only those who were not at all familiar with Hardy, compelled him out of self-respect, to finally abandon the form of literary art he had always planned to leave and resume openly that form of expression which he preferred. The novel was "gradually losing artistic form, with a beginning middle and end, and becoming a spasmodic inventory of items which has nothing to do with art." (1)

Hardy had always tried to keep his novels as near natural life and poetry as possible, but he always wrote down his experiences in society lest he should some day have to write a novel of society. He especially feared this after the trouble he had to get The Mayor of Casterbridge published. The publishers seemed to fear that the lack of gentry in this novel made it uninteresting. Now, however, Hardy was relieved to be able to turn to poetry again. For a long time he had been getting together the poems that went into his first volume of verse ranging in time from 1865 to 1901.

Many critics objected to Hardy's turning to poetry, as they claimed that anyone who had written prose for so long was quite incapable of expressing himself in verse. They seemed to forget that many of the poems had been written sometime before he even thought of prose. Hardy, however, paid little attention to the reception of his volume of poetry.

While working on The Dynasts Hardy was much grieved at losing his mother on Easter Sunday, 1894. She had always been a remarkable old lady, as full of life and vigor as many much younger.

(1) Later Years of Thomas Hardy, Vol. II. F. E. Hardy, p. 65.

Hardy was now so popular that editors were constantly begging him to write his reminiscences or to give his opinion on this or that, none of which could he be in any way persuaded to do.

The Dynasts was published in three parts, each part being received with greater enthusiasm than the one before. It was a theme and a piece of construction Hardy had long been considering and its completion proved to be well worth the effort he put into it.

In 1908 Hardy was made Governor of Dorchester Grammar School, a position which he did not want to accept at first but was finally persuaded to do perhaps by the fact that an ancestor, Thomas Hardy, had founded the school.

By this time Tess of the D'Urbervilles had been presented in a dramatized form with great success, as well as some of his other novels, and practically all of his novels had been translated into at least two or three different languages.

In the autumn of 1912, Mrs. Hardy began to complain of her heart a little. One day she sat down at the piano and played all her favorite pieces, and said that she would never play again. The Last Performance refers to this incident. In November she insisted upon going for a drive one damp day, after which she was very unwell. She grew steadily weaker and on November 27 died very quietly. She was buried at Stinsford where the Hardys had been buried for many years, a mile from Dorchester and Max Gate.

At the end of 1912 and the early part of 1913 Hardy wrote more than he had ever done in so short a time. He visited St. Juliot again and several

other scenes dear to the memory of his wife. in 1914 he married again.

When the war broke out he was heavy at heart to see his old view of the gradual bettering of human nature torn apart; it destroyed all his belief in the gradual ennoblement of man. He said that he probably would not have ended The Dynasts as he did if he could have seen what was coming.

Hardy was now passing through a very sad period; his sister Mary died and many of his dearest friends. He revisited Sturminster Newton with his second wife, but he was much saddened to see it, so much was it as it had been. This visit possibly inspired the Sturminster poems in Moments of Vision.

On his seventy-eighth birthday Hardy received a volume of holograph poems fr m some forty or fifty living poets and showed his appreciation by thanking each contributor personally. He felt he could take the trouble to write to them since they had taken the pains to write the poems. This was almost his first awakening to the consciousness that an opinion had silently grown up that he was not without renown in the contemporary world of poetry.

This unassuming modesty was characteristic of the man to the day of his death and was perhaps in part caused by all the adverse criticism he had received. He never wholly realized the extent of his popularity and consequently never assumed that air of worldly patronage which is so customary with successful people who are ever aware of their success. Then, too, it was not in his nature to be superior, as he felt himself to be too much a part of the world and the people in it. In 1922 Hardy was busy writing an

energetic preface to a volume of poems entitled Late Lyrics and Earlier. Some of his friends regretted this preface, thinking it showed an oversensitiveness to criticism which it would be better to hide from the world but that oversensitiveness was typical of Hardy, and it was interesting that he should have written it.

He received five honorary degrees of Ll. D. as a token of the position he had attained in the world of letters--from Aberdeen, Cambridge, Oxford, St. Andrews and Bristol University.

The Queen of Cornwall, a poetical play, was now completed and set to music by Rutland Boughton. Hardy was much interested in the production of it by the Balliol Players of whom he was fond. Hardy made his own drawing of Tintagel Castle from an imaginary view. It was a delicately drawn, remarkable bit of workanship for a man over eighty.

One time when Hardy was at Oxford, he met the then Poet-Laureate, Robert Bridges, and, though he could not know it, the Poet-Laureate to be, John Masefield.

Every once in a while Hardy would be possessed by a certain mania. At one time he had a craze for circuses; later for music halls. He was undoubtedly more interested in observing the people at these places than he was entertained by the performances.

In December 1927 an illness began which grew steadily and on January 11, 1928 he died. His heart was buried beside his first wife at Stinsford, where he had expressed a desire to be buried, but his ashes were interred at Westminster Abbey. His pallbearers were Stanley Baldwin and Ramsay MacDonald, representing the Government; Sir James M. Barrie, John Galsworthy,

Edmund Gosse, A. E. Housman, Rudyard Kipling and Bernard Shaw representing literature; the Master of Magdelene College, Cambridge and the Pro-Provost of Queen's College, Oxford, representing education. And last of all a spadeful of his beloved Dorset earth was sprinkled on the coffin.

CHAPTER II

PREPARATION FOR HIS WORK

A. ARCHITECTURE

At the time when Hardy first became apprenticed to John Hicks there was an architectural mania sweeping the western counties of England in a movement of restoration. It developed into a sort of vandalism with its tearing down of beautiful old churches, archways and screenings, and erecting the cheapest kind of imitations in their stead. Lovely monuments and old headstones were moved from one grave to another. Architect's assistants were sent out to copy the designs of old churches in every detail. This furnished a careful and particular training in the form and appreciation of art which proved to be invaluable to Hardy, but he always regretted his assistance in this sometimes willful destruction. He learned to scorn the "heathen apathy" of parson and parishioners with regard to this deletion of artistic treasures under their care.

In all Hardy's writings is the architectural point of view to be found. This early study of design strengthened and developed his natural feeling for form. Even his most insignificant lyrics have been given a very definite and inevitable metrical form, while the novels are molded within a singularly close knit unit of action. His feeling for literary design was further developed so that he now consciously used his specialized sense of balance, of proportion and of decorative beauty to bring his writings to a greater peak of attainment than had been reached by the writers of his day.

Hardy's beauty was the beauty of the Greeks who held it and order as one.

"What really matters in creative work of this sort is the form given to the material and Hardy felt that form should suit the subject. It can only be by a vigorous and exquisite order that the metaphysic of art, the ethically formed sense of temporal things can become expressed and symbolized throughout the whole of a work of art. There are no novels like Thomas Hardy's for perfection of form, and this is the sign of the inward perfection the novel has taken from his hands." (1)

It was this that kept The Dynasts from falling to pieces despite its colossal scheme and scope, and in The Queen of Cornwall Hardy says, himself: "The unities are strictly preserved, whatever virtue there may be in that, and I am old-fashioned enough to think there is virtue in it if it can be done without artificiality." (2)

A further example, perhaps, is the same form (though different psychological treatment) found in several of his novels, e.g.: Far From the Madding Crowd, The Return of the Native, and The Woodlanders. In each of these novels we find a central group of characters of four persons, two men and two women, and each series of lovers are so arranged as to be unable to form a closed chain without dislocation--a tragic arrangement. First we find Gabriel Oak, Diggory Venn and Giles Winterbourne, patient, ever adoring and wholly unselfish. In contrast we are given Sergeant Troy, Wildeve and Dr. Fitzpiers with their sharp intellects, fine manners and quick, faithless passions. Then there are the female counterparts; first of all Fanny Robin, Thomasin Yeobright and Marty South as contrasted with

(1) A Critical Study of Thomas Hardy, Lascelles Abercombie pp. 13-14
(2) Later Years of Thomas Hardy , F. E. Hardy pp 235-6

Bathsheba, Eustacia Vye and Grace Melbury. In respect to the women, I think Hardy shows a little more kindliness than he does to the men. In the men, the contrasts are contemptible, but with the women we are forced to like them almost better than their more docile sisters. The emotional tensions vary due to the additional characters in the novels, but these central figures are all clearly related.

About 1862 Hardy began visiting art museums and realizing that the ultimate value of art lay largely in the emotion it awakened. He longed to become an art critic. He studied intensively all the schools of sculpture and painting he found in London until he had evolved a complete theory of art and had absorbed many useful images. He soon abandoned the idea of becoming an art critic for the press, but the theories he had formed proved of great value in unifying and adding vitality to all his later work. That Hardy's belief in the absolute unity and equality of all art was to remain always with him is shown in its application throughout his writings.

Hardy loved drawing and painting for his own amusement and many of his sketches were later made into poetry or a novel. This, too, accounts for the photographic point of view assumed when he created his extraordinary word pictures, coupled with his intimate knowledge of all art.

B. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF WESSEX LIFE AND PEOPLE.

It is difficult to think of Thomas Hardy without thinking of a definite portion of the English countryside, though his writings apply so universally to all that is most intense in human life.

Perhaps it would not be stretching the truth too far to assume that, first of all, there was in Hardy an inherent love for his Wessex handed down to him from ancestor to ancestor.

in 1360 there lived two Norman brothers of the name of Le Hardy who mark the beginning of two definite branches of the Hardy family. The one, illustrious and renowned in naval and military exploits; the other, preferring the simple delights of a quiet countryside. Thomas Hardy was of this latter branch, though he was always intensely alive to the quality of his forefathers even when his own family had dwindled to absolute unimportance. His was an unavoidable interest and deep attachment to the soil over which his ancestors had pridefully stalked. His immediate ancestors were a definite part of the rural life in the community taking a keen interest and an important part in all the festivities and labors of the "underlings", mingling the while as with their own kind. In his own home were Wessex people working, constantly rubbing elbows with him; and in his childhood with whom was he to play but with their children. And always about him was the vast undying heath weaving its inexhaustible charm over the minds of these rustics and over Hardy himself.

A further inherent attachment to this country perhaps may have come from his mother who was herself of strong, English yeomanry proud of their labors with the soil and looking down, in their arrogance, on all who would seek a living elsewhere.

As has already been mentioned, Hardy's grandmother was a fountainhead of stories and traditions of the old Wessex and instilled in Hardy's young mind much of his feeling for and understanding of the Wessex people. She

told him too of the England of the early twenties when a young woman would walk for miles to take a quill from the tail of a goose with which to write love letters to her swain. Hardy himself could remember learning to write with a quill.

Bockhampton, where Hardy was born, was typical of his essex with its old, low houses, the tiny clusters of cottages and the inevitable tavern, all surrounded by the heath. The people too were slow-moving, deliberate, steeped in superstition and never swerving from their own narrow outlook on life.

Hardy loved this country both for itself and for its associations, but he loved the countryman for himself alone. However, he never writes of the Wessex underlings as one of them, but rather seems to examine them as one a little apart. He thoroughly understood their moods and passions though it must be noted that his expression of the tragedies of their life is not the instinctive fatalism of the peasant. The Wessex of Hardy's spirit was the Wessex of the past.

Within his home the Wessex dialect was absolutely forbidden except when it was necessary to address the help, but outside Hardy met it constantly and freely indulged in it. However, he acquired an even greater knowledge of the dialect in its older forms from the Reverend William Barnes of Winterbourne for whose works Hardy showed the greatest enthusiasm.

Barnes exerted practically no intellectual but great literary influence over Hardy, especially in his early activity as a lyric poet. We find the effect of the older man's kindly attitude to have been great when Hardy

turned his eye on the simple people and the simple details of country life.

In the Wessex novels there are many dialectic words, phrases and idioms, most of which may still be heard occasionally in the remoter districts. Probably, as Barnes held, the speech of Dorset and the adjoining counties was the outcome of the Anglo-Saxon language rather than a mere dialect, nearly all the words being traceable to their origin. The New Oxford Dictionary includes a number of these dialectic expressions which have been supplied by Hardy himself.

The dialect seems to have been the main attachment between Hardy and Barnes though it was differently used, Hardy tending to be much freer. Barnes was usually smooth.

The people of Barnes' Wessex were of the ancient country life with its folklore, superstitions and language. This old Wessex constituted the human surface of the Wessex into which Hardy was born and in the midst of which he lived his most impressionable years. And the Wessex of Hardy's spirit was the Elizabethan one and was firmly rooted through many even pre-Elizabethan periods.

C. THOMAS HARDY'S WESSEX

In presenting a faithful discussion of Thomas Hardy's Wessex there is so much that could be said that I find it necessary to limit myself to discussing the Wessex of the four pieces of literature that are to be taken up at any length in this thesis. As many of the places are to be found in nearly all of Hardy's works it will perhaps be no great omission

if I do not discuss the country of each novel separately.

Many people have been laboring under the false impression that the extent of the Hardy territory included Dorset only, but we have on his own assurance the proof that his Wessex is the Wessex of history which encompasses the counties of Berkshire, Wilts, Somerset, Hampshire, Dorset and Devon. As Hardy rarely uses the actual name of a place, it is difficult to ascertain to just what place he is referring. To a person acquainted with that stretch of the country however, it is possible to find the general locations realizing that they are only general, as there are many accessories necessary to the story which are found only in the story. Ofcourse it would be even more difficult to locate them at the present time as there have been so many changes and alterations since the date of the writing of the Wessex novels.

It is also of great interest to note how Hardy has made this scenery adapt itself to and identify itself with the characters themselves and with their experiences.

D. WRITINGS

1. TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES

The action of this novel covers a wide stretch of territory. The story opens in Marlott, which is really Marnhull, a place that was formerly of considerable importance, but which dwindled until the time of Hardy's novel it had become quite small. There can be seen signs of old roads and habitations, but for the most part there are few houses, with curious gaps between them. The name is probably a corruption of Marlhill

which refers to the white clay or marl to be found there which is used for freestone.

The "Pure Drop" Inn referred to is probably "The Crown". It is impossible to find the cottage where the Durbeyvields are supposed to have lived.

One morning very early Tess went to Casterbridge, which we think is Dorchester, and on the way she went up Bulbarrow, the second highest point in Dorset. Bulbarrow commands a magnificent view extending into the adjoining counties.

The house to which Tess was journeying to see her distant and distinguished D'Urberville relatives is known as "The Slopes" near the village of Trantridge, which suggests Pentridge. The house itself may have been copied from one a few miles distant or it may have been imaginary, as there is no house at the point described in the novel.

Chaseborough which nearly suggests Cranborne is where Tess was waiting for companions at the "Flower-de-Luce" Inn. This inn is readily recognized in Cranborne as the "Fleur-de-Lis". Cranborne itself was the market town of the district and was famous in Saxon and Norman times for its monastery. The church, one of the oldest and largest in Dorset, is still there. The name comes from the Anglo-Saxon words for "crane" and "river" as the winding of the river at this place suggests the neck of a crane.

Cranborne Chase (The Chase) is a real chase and not a forest. It is "the oldest wood in England" and covers some 800,000 acres, making it possible for a person to wander for miles without meeting anyone. The

text-writer referred to in connection with The Chase is still to be seen at the present day.

Then we come to the graveyard where Tess's baby was buried, which is now all scrupulously neat and well-cared for, but these graveyards used to have certain corners such as Hardy describes for the reprobate class of person designated.

- Talbothays Dairy is typical of many dairies to be found in the Froom Valley. It is impossible to decide on any particular one, though we can find the general location. The hill mentioned was perhaps near Puddleton which Hardy calls Weatherbury and it was from this hill that Tess got her first view of the place. Here everything was much vaster than at her home. The fields were irrigated and as a result were the most fertile and valuable of their kind in the country. Due to the swiftly flowing Froom river, the atmosphere was lighter, clearer and more brilliant than she was used to.

There is a portion of the road near Bockhampton Bridge which is often covered with water in the winter and this probably is the place where Angel Clare met the girls on their way to Church and carried them across.

West Stafford Church is probably the Church where Tess was married and Wool-Bridge House the place where she and Angel spent the early days of their union. This house is familiar to everyone about there and is very realistically described by Hardy. The pictures with their peculiar fascination, the legend of the coach and the abbey's grave whither Clare carried Tess, all are there.

These two probably separated at Sturminster Newton, Clare going on to Emminster (Beaminster)--"the hill-surrounded little town". There still exists in this town the old custom of locking the doors and leaving the key outside when the people go to church.

Tess went next to the dairy at Port-Bredy which is approximately Bridport. From there she went to Marion's place at Flintcombe-Ash. The farmhouse cannot be pointed out, but the actual position is to be found by going up a steep hill to a flat plateau (Barcombe Down) then along the crest of a hill to a ridged turf. This is the site of an ancient British village and is bleak and cold, really a "starve-acre place" as Marion says.

Tess's trip to Emminster is an interesting one. The road is rugged but it affords a beautiful and varied prospect with its serpentine lanes and woodland which lies below, including practically the whole background of The Woodlanders. The utter loneliness of the road becomes even more weirdly quiet when she reaches the stone pillar form at Cross-in-Hand, the stone where she swears not to tempt Alec. This is the most forlorn spot on her trip.

The walk from Marnhull to Flintcombe-Ash is a very difficult one with its fifteen miles of steep ascent and descent over Bulbarrow and finally the plunge into the heavy scented Blackmoor Vale.

Tess and her family go next to Kingsbere which we recognize to be Bere Regis. This moving scene is to be witnessed every year on April 16 (Lady Day, old style) when the working people move. Bere Regis was once a royal residence, supposed to have contained a palace of Queen Elfrida.

It was also a Roman station. The church is still a fine building where ibe can yet see the traceried window and the vaults of the Turberville family. This window obviously suggested the window in the novel under which the bedstead was erected.

Clare's search for Tess takes us through another portion of the landscape--from Emminster along Bemil Lane, past King's Hintock (Melbury Osmund) estates, and Cross-in-Hand to Flintcombe-Ash and Marlott thence to Shaston and finally to Sandbourne which we know as Bournemouth. Hardy's description of this place is almost literal.

It is difficult to trace the flight of Tess and Angel at first. The house they stopped at was perhaps Moyle's Court, a place believed by many to be haunted by the spirit of its former owner.

Stonehenge, where they were finally overtaken, is well known to everyone. Tess was lead away from here to Wintoucher (Winchester). Winchester is a favored city which preserves much of its old time historic interest and Hardy's descriptions of it are true. At the top of the West Hill we can still find the milestone beside which Angel Clare stood with Liza-Lu, though the view is somewhat changed by the many trees that have grown up since then.

2. JUDE THE OBSCURE

The action in this novel centers around the northern portion of Wessex and, as this is the last novel written, there have been fewer changes in the places described. The visitor, therefore, will not feel the same disappointment in viewing these places as in seeing those of the earlier stories.

The book opens in Marygreen, a little hamlet five miles south of Wantage, a spot which seems to correspond with the quiet village of Great Fawley. Great Fawley is set deeply amidst the undulations of a sparsely populated district where the land is cultivated with the greatest difficulty. In July the down is gay with a covering of flowers while the roads stand out glaringly white in the sun and a thin dust from the chalky soil fills the air. Great Fawley is only great in comparison to its even smaller neighbor, Little Fawley.

The Green which Hardy mentions is to be found at the upper end of the village. The old well is on the margin of the Green and the schoolhouse, the church and the cottage all are to be seen, while even a glimpse of the Brown House, known locally as the Red House, is to be had from the Green with its long stretch of cultivated land sloping up to it.

Christminster is far to the northward beyond the hills that encompass the village. To catch a sight of this "promised land" Jude followed an old trackway, an original Roman road, which is now entirely grass grown but visible even across the downs. Jude mounts a ladder at the Brown House and sees the halo of light around Oxford. It is a wide and magnificent view; Oxford sparkling with a sophistication which the soft, untrammelled atmosphere of Great Fawley utterly lacks.

Alfredston, potentially Wantage, is the next place Jude goes to as apprentice to a stone cutter. Wantage is a place of great historical interest as the birthplace of King Alfred in 849, the man to whom is due the credit for making Wessex as we know it. In the center of the market place is a statue to his memory.

Now we go on to Cresscombe which is perhaps Letcombe Bassett. From Great Fawley there is nothing but a rough track which is hard to find, but from Wantage there is a direct road. By following the river we find a picturesque thatched cottage standing in the watercress beds which we immediately recognize as the counterpart of Arabella's home. The cottage where Jude and Arabella lived after their marriage was destroyed by fire over thirty-six years ago so now only its site can be found.

Christminster, which we have already recognized as Oxford, affords a great contrast. Here we find High Street to be familiar as Chief Street; Merton Street with its cobbled paving as Old Lime Street; Carfax as Four Ways; Christ Church as Cardinal College; Corpus Christi as Sarcophagus; Church of St. Mary-the-Virgin as "the church with the Italian Porch"; the Sheldonian Theatre as "the circular theatre with that well-known la tern above it". Jude meets Sue at the ominous spot on Broad Street where the Martyrs were burnt. There is still a cross in the pavement marking the spot.

At Lumsdon, probably Cumnor, it is comparatively easy to find the original of the school-house where Phillotson is supposed to have taught.

Melchester we recognize as the ancient city of Salisbury where the first thing we see as we come in sight of the city is the spire of the Cathedral, the highest in the country. It is here that Sue goes to normal school and there is still a training college there which corresponds almost exactly with the author's description of it. It is here also that Jude works on "the Cathedral repairs" which were done by Sir Gilbert

Scott between 1870 and 80. The North Gate and several other places including the Church where Sue and Phillotson are married are given their own names. Within this city there is quite an old world atmosphere intensified on market days by the huge throngs of country people crowding the market place and their occasional lapses into the Wessex dialect.

Kennethbridge seems to be in all particulars Newbury.

Shaston shows an almost exact delineation of Shaftesbury, a place of ancient historic interests, but today merely a skeleton of what it was in the Middle Ages. There still exists, however, a spirit of iconoclasm which works toward further degradation to the ancient features of the town. Its position is raised above the encompassing Blackmoor Vale, is imposing in appearance and commands a superb view. Due to its situation it is perhaps one of the windiest places in the country.

The house that Sue and her husband occupy is still to be seen opposite the school and dates back to the early part of the sixteenth century. The Abbey Walk passes in front of the school. The Abbey itself is nothing but a ruin attached to what was once the wealthiest nunnery in the country. Shaftesbury has no history beyond Saxon times when it was quite important, but legendary accounts connect the town with the date of King Solomon. Together with Dorchester, Bridport and Wareham it formed one of the four royal boroughs of Dorset. The old industries of leather, worsted and buttons have long since died out.

Aldbrickham represents Reading, an emminently commercial town, a place of progress. It is an old place but there have been such constant alterations

that most of the ancient interests have been hidden behind the new. It is impossible to find the house here where Sue and Jude lived so long, as there are many such houses but the George Hotel is easily discovered.

Stoke-Barehills, which we feel is Basingstoke, is another ancient Roman place which has undergone the curse of many alterations. The mediaeval ruins which Hardy refers to are the remains of the Chapel of the Holy Ghost founded in 1525 but which lost its renown in less than a century.

The church where we find Jude and Sue working as decorators is probably at Shinfield, a village a few miles south of Reading. From there we follow them to many places until we arrive back at Oxford. The church where Sue keeps going for meditation and prayer is none other than St. Barnabus which was designed by Hardy's early employer, Blomfield. We cannot find the tavern where Arabella discovers Jude, nor can we locate the house where he died, but we know it is in the center of the town not far from the Sheldonian Theatre.

3. THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

The action in this novel is limited to a very circumscribed area, and this unity of place gives a deeply marked dramatic quality. The whole background is nature, and the characters, with the exception of one, are entirely in harmony with the environment. "It is Nature pure, Nature simple, yet illimitable and mysterious". (1)

Egdon Heath, the one setting of the novel, represents the vast moorland which extends from Dorchester to Bournemouth. It is a natural, untamed

(1) Thomas Hardy's Wessex, Hermann Lea, p. 67

wildness spurning every attempt at agriculture, yet is subtly attractive. In fact, Hardy, as do so many people, claims that the heath is always beautiful, but to really appreciate and understand it one must see it at the moment when darkness closes down upon it. It rarely has the same aspect for long; in spring the predominant color is purplish brown; in summer it is a purple-red patched with every shade of green; in autumn it presents an orange color scheme; and in winter it shows us all russet browns with still a tinge of purple and blue black hollows.

It is not surprising that Hardy should have absorbed its atmosphere so completely, and thus been enabled to show us its active influence on his characters. To Eustacia Vye, it was as a foreign land, but to Clym Yeobright it was home. Nearly all the action takes place on the heath where, in its wild centre amid its ancient barrows, its crater-like pits, its rushy pools and valleys, was enacted the mingled tragedy and comedy of the several lives we are following.

In the novel, the center and apex of the heath is Rainbarrow, but in reality Rainbarrow is on the western edge of the heath. Hardy probably moved it in for a more general effect.

By taking the London Road out of Dorchester and going to the right at the top of Stinsford Hill we come, after three miles, to a road turning somewhat abruptly to the left, going to Puddletown and passing Coombe-Firtrees. This road is typical of the "aged highway" in the novel where Captain Vye was walking when the Reddleman overtook him. The Reddlemen are out of existence now though some fifty or more years ago many of the

farmers were still utterly dependent upon them. Reddle is a sort of red chalk which was once extensively used for marking sheep. The "heath-croppers" drawing the cart were once quite common on Egdon Heath, but are never seen now.

The Reddleman had travelled far that day, coming from Anglebury, which we believe to be Wareham, following a road which kept him in sight of the heath. It crossed the very centre of the expanse running mostly on the ridge of the hills with the Froom Valley on the left hand and the Rydel Valley on the right.

Rainbarrows is really a group of hills, the largest of which is probably representative of the Rainbarrow in the novel. The word "barrow" denotes a mound or hillock in its most literal sense, though the term is now used to denote a burial-place. It was on the top of Rainbarrows that the bonfire was kindled as the usual method of celebrating historic episodes. Its origin was probably in prehistoric times and of a religious nature. This beacon is seldom seen now.

The Quiet Woman Inn is no longer an inn, but a dairy-house known as "The Duck". Once it was the "Wild Duck Inn" and even earlier was the "Traveller's Rest" and had a secret hiding place for smuggled goods. There was a cavity in the walls on the upper story not discernable from below. The wall has since been removed. The evidence of its having been an inn is shown by a little hatch in the wall separating the parlor from the kitchen. Through it many foaming pots of ale used to pass at the time of the novel. Some of the features of the "Quiet Woman" were borrowed

from a similar inn called "The Red Lion", a haunt of smugglers.

Mistover Knap is supposed to be only a short distance from Rainbarrow, but there is really nothing to mark where the house stood. There is, however, a pool answering the description in the book to the north of the barrows close under a bank. The remains of an old closed brick kiln are in a hollow near. Mistover is the fictitious name given to a few houses scattered on the heath here built of mud. They have all disappeared now and the art of building them is lost with them. They were sturdy enough as long as the roofs were kept in repair, but once the roof gave way the walls literally melted. The fir trees which backed Mistover have likewise disappeared--burned in one of the fires which ravage the heath at intervals.

Blooms-End was drawn from a farm-house called Shompston standing in a grass field off the margin of the heath in the direction of Lower Backhampton village. It is much altered now. The white palings that once enclosed it have disappeared, but the back where the mummers were still retains certain of its characteristics. Mumming or momming was very common in mediaeval England, a survival, perhaps, of the Roman masquerade during the orgies of Saturnalia. There have been some spurious imitations recently, but mumming has not been done seriously for seventy or more years.

There are many curious conical pits on Egdon Heath, some quite deep and abrupt. It was to such a one that Mrs. Yeobright and Thomasin went to gather holly for decorations.

The church where Wildeve and Thomasin were supposed to be married may

be Mellstock, or Stinsford.

Many of the customs mentioned in the book are now extinct, but one that still persists is that of "hair-cutting". It may be seen almost any Sunday morning. Another one occasionally seen is the drawing of blood from the supposed witch, as Susan pricking Eustacia's arm with a needle in church.

Alderworth is the name given by Hardy to the cottage where Clym and Eustacia lived after they were married and was probably at Affpuddle in the direction of East Egdon village. Alderworth was in a lonely situation disguised from the heath by a belt of fir trees. To reach it one must retrace the steps of the Reddleman to Rainbarrow through Stickford, under Clyffe Clump, along the old Wareham Road to Moreton North Lodge and then off to the left and left again.

We cannot definitely follow the path or find the place of rest chosen by Mrs. Yeobright on her visit to Alderworth for it is apt to be almost a ywhere in that general direction, as there are many such places. The remedy used to cure the adder sting is an ancient one and is occasionally resorted to now. There have even been some cures effected by it.

For Shadwater Weir we find the actual model in the meadows behind Woodsford Castle and it can be reached either from there or by a lane from "The Quiet Woman". It takes the water from the river Froom. At times it is fairly quiet but in the winter it is a boiling cauldron of terrific force.

Stickleford where Diggory and Thomasin lived is really Tincleton. The house is a picturesque farmhouse of stone with heavy chimneys and a general appearance of solidity. It served as a dairy house.

4. THE DYNASTS

We shall limit our description of this epic drama to the English countryside only, as it covers a wide stretch of land even in England.

The first scene of the first act has been given no distinctive name, but from its description it seems to be the summit of Ridgeway Hill midway between Dorchester and Weymouth. As we approach from Dorchester we see before the summit is reached a track on the right hand side. This is the old road which passes over the ridge and descends abruptly into the village of Upwey where it joins the new road. It has not been mended for years and portions of it are covered with grass.

On the descent we have a magnificent panorama before us, the Isle of Portland rising out of the sea looking grim and forbidding; before it the roofs of Weymouth glitter in the sunshine, and beyond that the lakelike inlet, Backwater, sparkles dazzlingly. To the right of Weymouth is Chesil Beach and the long, sweeping curve and shoreline of West Bay, or Deadman's Bay.

King George's Watering Place is recognized as Weymouth. At this date there was much worry over Napoleon and when and where he would land.

The fourth scene of the second act is on Bincombe Down where we are impressed at first glance with its changelessness. Here, among the barrows, is a bit of nature that has never been tampered with by human agency. The name "Bincombe" is derived from the English-Saxon word

Binan-Comb meaning the inside dell and doubtless refers to the contour of the hill. This hill commands a view over the English Channel, Weymouth, Portland and the stretch of water where the men-of-war and frigates were anchored. The review mentioned here, where the King rides up to view it, is an accurate one. It was in reality a monster one, the line extending for three miles. The plateau is sufficiently large to hold a vast number of people and is divided here and there by stone walls. The down has seen many a military camp since then, and is little changed now but it has never been so gay or thickly populated as in the day of George III.

Gloucester Lodge, the King's residence then, is now Gloucester Hotel and near it stands a statue of the King.

Pos'ham or Portisham is the home and birthplace of Captain Hardy.

The fifth scene of the second act is on Rainbarrows, on the top of the largest of these barrows, once a neolithic burial place. Close beside the barrows is an old Roman road, chosen for its wide outlook. In Hardy's description of the spot there was a house of turves with a brick chimney on the sheltered side of the barrow during these Napoleonic wars. Perhaps he took the evidence for this structure from the foundation of a brick chimney shaft to be seen there still. There is an extensive view from Rainbarrows (including Max Gate). There, and on Kingsbere Hill were stored ricks of dry fuel ready to kindle when the signal should be given.

The first scene of the fourth act and the scene of the fifth act

are at Weymouth, first in Gloucester Lodge, then in "The Old Rooms Inn". This inn is still to be seen close to the quay on the other side of the harbor-bridge, with its Elizabethan details at the back. The front has been modernized.

The Victory, at rest in Portsmouth Harbor and anchored nearly midway between Portsea and Gosport, is surrounded now by many honorable and historic companions. It offers a strong contrast with the modern ships in the harbor. The spot on the deck where Nelson is supposed to have fallen is marked by a brass tablet. Masterman Hardy's cabin is there and within it the barge presented by Queen Victoria for conveying his body to Whitehall on its way to St. Paul's for burial. The death-scene is on the ship executed from a drawing made on the voyage home. The cockpit is still lighted by dim lanterns.

The action now goes to London, to Weymouth, and for a short scene to Shockerwick House, a grand old place with picturesque scenery, four miles from Bath. It was formerly the seat of the Wiltshire family, and the Picture Gallery here forms the background against which Pitt and Wiltshire stand out in the sixth act.

As has been said before, we shall skip the Continental fields and so we come to Durnover Green, Casterbridge; Fordington Green is apparently the original of Durnover Green. It is still an open space as it was then. The old vicarage described is now the ivy-shrouded house standing opposite the new vicarage.

CHAPTER III

PHILOSOPHY

"The power of consistently imagining human beings with all their individual wills and desires as special manifestations of a universal tendency which has control of everything within them except their assertion of their own consciousness and feeling, and the power of presenting this imagination in vigorous human action is one of the greatest characteristics of Hardy's genius." (1)

In his four most famous dramatic novels, The Woodlanders, Far From the Madding Crowd, The Return of the Native and The Mayor of Casterbridge, the action is a woven intricacy of the lives of several persons through a single complicated pattern of destiny. The interest of the stories is concerned with several people, usually four contrasted personalities obeying one general impulse. The attitude to nature held by the central persons is as important in the whole effect as the composite plotting of their various emotions of jealousy, love and enmity. It is symbolic of personality knowing itself helpless against one universal tendency now acqu escing in it, now rebelling.

In Tess of the D'Urbervilles and Jude the Obscure we find the epic form rather than dramatic, and meet one human theme. The Mayor of Casterbridge anticipates these so-called epics. In this type all formal control is freed from keeping the mere matter of the story in order and can present much that dramatic form omits. The inevitable

I. Thomas Hardy, Lascelles Abercrombie, p.70

agony is not only set forth, but judged. If a man has his intellect which helps him to understand the manner of his existence, he also has his sense of justice and it shows him this existence of his as a harsh and senseless violation of his profoundest belief, the belief that his sense of justice ought to be satisfied. It is perhaps merely a modern version of the oldest and most unshakable of all religious and philosophical doctrines, that of original sin, of the fatal antimony between man's nature and the divine impulse of the world. The atmosphere is charged with a fierce indignation against the fundamental injustice of man's existence.

Hardy himself says this of tragedy: "Tragedy may be created by an oppressing environment either of things inherent in the universe, or of human institutions. If he uses the former, the writer is regarded as impious; if he uses the latter, he is called subversive and dangerous when all the while he may never have questioned the necessity or urged the non-necessity of either". (1) Hardy resented deeply the unjust criticisms he received for his two great epic novels as he realized how little they were understood, yet he often referred, humorously enough, to what these "nice minds with nasty ideas" read into his stories.

One of the most obvious qualities of Hardy's tragedy is that it does not begin in the persons who are most concerned in it, but is an invasion into human consciousness of the general tragedy of existence which puts itself forth in living symbols. The characters are not mere puppets moved by a malicious fate, as some think; Hardy considers fate

(1)
Later Years of Thomas Hardy, Vol. II. F. E. Hardy, p. 44.

as a condition of activity, a general measureless process of existence where all activity is included. Hardy's Fate cares nothing, in working itself out, for the needs and desires of individual existence. The individual must obey the general. This is unfortunate for sensitive natures who feel that their desires have some creative value, some cosmic power. This faculty of formative desire which in art does master the world into a sort of cognition sublimated by will and feeling is, in Hardy, the main point of his tragedy. Without this individual desire, which ordinary existence cannot help but leave unsatisfied, life could not be supposed to have an altogether tragic significance. We never feel Hardy's characters to be isolated in a purely human world as the conditions of their being, and being, itself, is always bound up in an immense background of fatal processes.

There is no supposition of a fate which attempts to dislocate or interfere with earthly business. It is simply that the unswerving perpetual necessity of the world is shown through some human agent, and its ruthlessness and fearful carelessness of what it inflicts on suffering humans are portrayed.

Such a basic conception, to become tragedy, needs human resistance and nobility and dignity. There is no tragedy where there is no striving or resistance. Tragedy must be a thing enjoyable, so to speak, in itself, so that in spite of the futility we enjoy the quality of the assertion of the desire. An abject life is not enjoyable, so we find Henchard, Tess, and Jude who endure the most pitiless destiny, never abject.

Their destiny is not merely external to the characters who contend with it, but is internal as well. The main tendency which the characters obey in the end is after all the characters themselves, and only thus could they really symbolize the basic conception of Hardy's tragedy. In them there is some weakness, some disability, some inherited instinct, or some error in the assertion of their strength which inevitably becomes the chance for the power of the world finally to assert itself against them. Hardy, however, tries to soften this aspect by a certain tenderness and mercy especially in his treatment of his women. They are, on the whole, disturbing and almost sinister agents in the stories, but it is their fate and not their fault. They do not exist as personalities chiefly for male desire to crystallize around, but are entirely in their own right as individuals.

Hardy's work has much in common with the more austere ancient classical writers. He was well read in Greek literature, but Aeschylus was perhaps his greatest influence. The end of Tess of the D'Urbervilles is translated from Aeschylus and is used, contrary to the opinions of many, in a purely classical sense. Hardy seemed almost unconscious of the very deep seated strain of disillusionment and pessimism which runs through the greater part of early Greek literature and which has found expression in his own writings either consciously or unconsciously. He repudiated what he terms "the Greek point of view in art". An example of this is in The Return of the Native where he attempted to contrast the general Greek attitude towards life with the modern viewpoint. (1)

Hardy's pessimism, too, is not merely a grievousness, but a pessimism

(1) Life of Thomas Hardy, Brennecke. p. 176

capable of tragedy and finds expression in his later works merely in incidents such as the suicidal boy in Jude the Obscure---"the outcome of the new views of life" and typifying "the coming universal wish not to live". In Jude himself we find another element of pessimism for "he was the sort of man who was born to ache a good deal before the fall of the curtain upon his unnecessary life should signify that all was well with him again". (1)

Hardy had great insight into the workings of the human heart, so that his sordid themes received a sympathetic treatment from him combined with a curious coldness and aloofness. His was a revolt against the optimism and superficial sweetness of his age. Hardy felt that the idea of "Poetic Justice" and the inevitable happy ending to be absolutely inconsistent with honesty to the facts or to the significance of life. He claimed that no previous general conceptions of what ought to be should be permitted to influence the full recognition of the facts themselves as such. He found the universe lawless, so to speak, with a Higher Power, not malignant as so many think (for that would be attributing anthropomorphic qualities to it which I feel Hardy never intended it to have), but as an indifferent or unconscious Fate, or perhaps just Nature itself. He learned to view the ferment of this same "Personality" in the souls and actions of men with little awe, but added sympathy, recognizing in them the model of himself.

In 1878 The Return of the Native was published and received with much enthusiasm. In this novel, considered by many to be Hardy's greatest, we find the outstanding element to be Egdon Heath which forms the whole back-

I. Thomas Hardy, Abercrombie, pp. 21-22

ground of the book as a vast, careless oppression influencing and twisting the lives of the people in spite of themselves. To Eustacia Vye the Heath is particularly oppressive while to Clym it is home. Eustacia is an impressive though not a charming woman. She conquers and commands, her nature is stormy and passionate and she is scornfully determined to recognize no law but her own nature. To her the world is a huge, deliberate conspiracy consciously inventing devices to ruin her. It is an expression of the working out of her own incarnate destiny.

In Clym Yeobright we find a scepticism of worldly rewards and a sincere indifference to success. To him the Heath is his home, is beautiful in every aspect, but again it is the Heath which indirectly brings about his tragedy. It is his cruel fate to be ensnared by Eustacia whereas his one weakness, lack of ambition and love of the Heath are a source of great irritation to her. Chance, again, interferes when Mrs. Yeobright goes to see them, and prevents Eustacia from opening the door while Eustacia weakly fears to tell Clym, so that the first explosive part of their tragedy ensues, to be followed by the swiftly moving events of an inexorable destiny.

Perhaps Wildeve could be called the personification, if one person could be so called, of this malicious fate, for he wends his evil way throughout the novel causing unhappiness to everyone. Mrs. Yeobright, with her formidable pride and stubbornness, is another agent (an unwitting one) of this same fate, while poor Thomasin, with her inherent weakness of character, is buffeted about in the general stream of life. For Thomasin there is a happy ending, the one softening influence of this

tragedy.

Hardy said in regard to The Return of the Native a thing which is universally applicable, that the beauty of association is entirely superior to the beauty of aspect; intrinsic value as compared to extrinsic value. That is, seeing beauty in ugliness, as one object being apparently ugly but beautiful to the owner because of its associations. That is the basic theory of the attitude of these people toward their surroundings, why Thomasin and Clym loved it so, and why Eustacia hated it.

In 1891 Tess of the D'Urbervilles was published and caused a tremendous sensation. This novel was the result of many months of reflection and research. Tess's tragedy was the cruel reasoning of a universal fate. Her tortured life, unnecessarily sensitive, is symbolic of the quiet, ruthless working out of fate. This fate is utterly careless of how its medium is tormented, so Hardy fills her life with an irreconcilable indignation against the prime tragic condition of life.

This novel is the sensational tragedy of the virtuous, seduced woman. It is the dualism of a merciless, unhesitating, tragic imagination and an impotent feeling of kindness for its central figure who, in a way, through her own weakness and blindness helps to bring about her own destruction ultimately. But this weakness is not her fault; she is advised wrongly and the major characters with her are weaker than she. Alec D'Urberville, though he is converted, is not capable of any profound development and soon returns to torment Tess. Angel Clare has a very fastidious nature, is conscious of his own purity and wholly unconscious of his deep

insincerity. He believes in his own breadth of vision but acts in a narrow, mean way. He is, after all, the telling blow in Tess's life. Tess often wonders just why she should have been brought into the world to suffer for something not of her own doing when she had never asked to be born at all. At times she merely hopes, modestly and humbly, for the happiness in life which her instincts seem to promise her and at other times she is rebellious, but neither avail her anything. Her destiny constantly drives forward in one relentless onward movement bringing her anguish and crime and finally destruction.

The story is worked out in the simplest and barest manner but with terrible earnestness. Hardy has built up a spacious background of living earth for this march of events beginning with the lovely little unsophisticated village where Tess was born, then making each setting bleaker and bleaker corresponding to each event in the progression towards the end.

In referring to the fact that Tess killed her husband Hardy felt that Tess, having a lover, did not kill Alec because she really wished to kill him, but because she wished to kill the situation.

in 1895 Jude the Obscure was published and proved to be a still more passionate study of an unusual psychological phenomena. Hardy deeply resented what the critics read into his novels and said that his "story was really sent out to those people into whose souls the iron has entered and has entered deeply at sometime in their lives". (1)

"It is not an immoral book. It is a breaking away from the 'farmyard view' of morality and distinguishing actual matrimony from the simple formula. He has in reality heightened and strengthened the dignity

(1) Later Years of Thomas Hardy, F. E. Hardy, p. 40

of traditional moral law and in this way has given his passion fullest play. Hardy, himself, says that the crash of a broken commandment is as necessary an accompaniment to the catastrophe of a tragedy as the noise of the drum and cymbals is to a triumphal march." (1)

Jude could be considered as the male counterpart of Tess with the same history of baffled aspirations working like an argument fate holds with itself, reasoning whether man's personal effort can have any final value in the course of its own existence. Also the element of background works its heartless influence in the conditions governed by characteristically British social and academic prejudices.

There is a certain amount of irony in this novel as, for instance, Jude being stirred to his soul by the hymn "The Foot of the Cross" and then his great disappointment at meeting the composer. Then again, when Jude goes repentent into Church just as the choir sings "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his ways". The final and most awful bit of irony is after Father Time has hanged himself and the other children and the organ in the church nearby plays "Truly God is loving unto Israel".

The story merely discusses the outcome of two unhappy marriages due to the curse of the hereditary temperament peculiar to each of the two parties. In no way, says Hardy, did he express his own views. He showed the ideal life a man wished to lead and the squalid real life he was fated to lead. The throwing of the pizzle at the supreme moment of his young dream was to sharply initiate the contrast of the heights and the depths of life and living. Hardy did not intend there should be anything depraved

(1) Havelock Ellis, Philosopher of Love, Houston Peterson p.[illegible]

or perverted in Sue's nature. Her only abnormalism consists in disproportion, not in inversion, her sexual instinct being healthy in so far as it goes, but unusually weak and fastidious. Her intimacies with Jude were only occasional and she objected to marriage as being unfair to Jude for then she could not feel free to withhold herself from Jude as she had been doing, at will. Sue was a type that had always interested Hardy but about whom he had always hesitated to write, realizing how little she would be understood.

Arabella is probably the villain of the novel; either she or Jude's own personal constitution, if there could be a villain other than chance.

Hardy is definitely to be classed with the Determinists as his system of philosphy shows; yet he is not a fatalist though the element of fatalism runs strongly throughout his work. Fate carries on, despite the protests of its victims, but the fact that the Hardy characters rebel against their lot proves that they, and so Hardy, cannot accept its working submissively as something foreordained.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DYNASTS

The idea of a great poetic drama concerning the Napoleonic wars had been growing in Hardy's mind for years before it finally developed into The Dynasts. There were, according to Hardy, three main reasons which induced him to write this epic. He was well acquainted with that section of the Wessex country where King George's Watering-Place was located, and where much of the business of carrying on the war was conducted. It was this part of the English coast that seemed most vulnerable and here it was that the French were constantly expected to land. Furthermore, this particular section of the country-side included the birthplace of Nelson's flag captain at Trafalgar. This flag captain was one of Thomas Hardy's ancestors and his intense pride in his ancestral achievements perhaps first brought to his mind the plan of weaving this particular episode into a drama.

The Dynasts is not a drama for stage production, but rather for production in the imagination. The action is woven about a story that should be well known to everyone and for that reason Hardy omits many details and bits of action which should be included in a drama as such. These other incidents must be supplied in the imagination. Were it not for the supernatural spirits which are introduced in part to explain this theme, the play would be scarcely intelligible.

These spirits are not supposed to present any definite philosophy,

but are merely a contrivance of the imagination in which Hardy hopes that their utterances have enough semblance of truth that the reader is willing to believe in them for the duration of the drama. But again, in this work as in all his others, we find Hardy's destiny, here called the "Immanent Will" as a somewhat heedless, absent-minded, and almost reckless fate which cares little for personal designs.

This drama is the story of Napoleon at the height of his career and carries us on to his downfall. At the opening of the play, about 1802, Napoleon had written to King George III asking that a peace be made between England and France. King George spurns this idea feeling that it would only be encouraging Napoleon in his disastrous policies and openly declares war on Spain. Napoleon is angered greatly by this and plans to give up his other battles long enough to defeat England and make London his headquarters. He sends his plans to Decres, his Minister of the Marine, who forwards word to the French Admirals Villeneuve and Ganteaume that they are to join all their ships and sail to Boulogne where Napoleon plans to join them and lead the attack on England. First, however, he plans to avoid suspicion by putting great emphasis on his coronation in Italy.

In the meantime England has become dissatisfied to a certain extent, with the Conservative policies of Pitt and makes one or two more drastic moves for building up the strength of the English army. England signs a treaty with Russia, Prussia and Austria to dethrone Napoleon which, as later events show, proved worthless. England suspects Napoleon's plan

despite his careful manoeuvers, and makes the necessary fortifications against France.

Villeneuve, realizing that England is aware of this plan and aware of the fact that his men and his ships are not at the time able to do battle with the English navy, refuses to follow Napoleon's injunction. Napoleon, furious at this, orders Villeneuve to do as he had been notified before and informs him of his removal from office upon his return.

Villeneuve becomes frantic at this and recklessly plans to sail for England. He is overtaken at Trafalgar by the English vessels under Nelson and, in perhaps one of Hardy's most vivid acts in the whole drama, is defeated at Trafalgar. It is in this battle that Nelson loses his life and is brought back to England to be buried. Alone and dejected after this defeat and the resultant disgrace Villeneuve kills himself.

Napoleon, with his usual superb strategy, defeats the Austrian army under General Mack at Ulm. England is much distressed at this apparently unnecessary defeat and blames Prussia for not interceding. It is after this battle that Nelson defeats the French at Trafalgar and hopelessly demolishes the French navy.

The next battle occurs within the two days at Austerlitz where Napoleon faces the Austro-Russian armies. Napoleon hears at this place the details of the Battle of Trafalgar and is much oppressed by the feeling of the great power of England and the number of her allies. As he says, "'Tis a duel 'twixt this Pitt and me: ----------

I everywhere tonight around me feel
As from an unseen monster haunting nigh
His country's hostile breath! (1)

The Dynasts, Part I, Hardy, p. 112 .

And so even more carefully than ever he plans to "choke" it. He maps out his campaign in such a way as to deceive the Russian and Austrian generals as to what he really is going to do. His schemes are successful and the Austro-Russian armies are utterly routed. Generals Buxhovden and Langeron rally their armies to retreat by way of a hamlet, Aujezd. Langeron's columns are cut off and they and some other detachments rush for the Satschan Lake. The ice cracks beneath their weight and Napoleon, with incredible cruelty sends a volume of cannon shot down which breaks the ice and sinks two thousand fugitives into the icy waters.

Immediately upon this Napoleon awaits the Austrian Emperor. Napoleon explains to Francis what folly was his alliance with Russia and makes many promises for good to Austria. Francis, persuaded by Napoleon and without consulting Alexander of Russia, agrees on behalf of them both to the Armistice which Napoleon suggests. Francis promises that he and Alexander shall withdraw their troops and, if possible, close their ports to English trade.

The next scene goes back to England, near Bath at Shockerwick House, and offers a short contrast to the scene of battle in the discussion of painting and art by Pitt and Wiltshire, the owner. It is short-lived, however, as news comes of the defeat at Austerlitz and Pitt is again thwarted.

Napoleon receives every honor in Austria and Russia and wins Augusta, daughter of the King of Bavaria for his son Eugene. His glory and his popularity are great at home as well as abroad.

Part First of The Dynasts closes sadly with the death of the heart-

broken Pitt who, even on his death-bed, thinks only of England, the country he loved so well and endeavored to serve so faithfully, but vainly.

Part Two opens in the lodgings of the new prime minister of England, Fox. A Frenchman is ushered in to him, whom Fox wishes to employ as a spy. This man, Gevrilliere, is really a member of a group of assassins who are planning to kill Napoleon and Gevrilliere tells Fox of this scheme and asks his co-operation. Fox is angered by so dastardly a plan and feeling that Napoleon is too great a man for such treatment, warns him of it. Napoleon thanks Fox for this courtesy and asks for a peace treaty, which England refuses to give unless Russia can be a party to it. Napoleon vetoes this plan and so the enmity continues. Fox dies and Lauderdale becomes Prime Minister.

Meantime Prussia is angered because Napoleon has spurned all her attempts at peace and so plans to go to war. The French defeat the Prussians at Jena, one of the most important battles of the Napoleonic wars. Sometime shortly after this battle Napoleon and the Tsar Alexander of Russia meet on a barge on the river Niemen at Tilsit and make a secret pact which mysteriously enough is reported in full in England the next day.

Napoleon in his treaty with Russia asks the Tsar for his younger sister. Napoleon plans to divorce Josephine because she bore him no son to perpetuate his name and to wed the Tsar's fourteen year old sister.

Alexander makes no promise on this question but leads Napoleon to feel that his wish will be granted.

Napoleon gives a dinner at Tilsit which the Tsar attends and which the King and Queen of Prussia are required to attend. Queen Louisa is a beautiful, strong-minded woman, stronger than her husband. Alexander loved her dearly at one time and at this banquet Napoleon nearly succombs to her charms, but his greedy desires keep him from giving in to her finally.

From here Hardy goes to the campaigns in Spain and Portugal. Napoleon dethrones the King of Spain and puts his own kin on the throne, much against the will of the people. When the English army goes to Spain the Spaniards promise to co-operate, but in their vacillating way at the last moment they aid the French and thus many times thwarted the English armies, though they were not often defeated.

The King of England becomes infirm of mind. The Prince-Regent is a boisterous, sensual man who gives little heed and no practical assistance to the crisis. He entertains lavishly and with the help of his companions manages to impress the common people with his ability and interest in their welfare during this crisis.

When Napoleon tells Josephine that he is going to divorce her she is heartbroken and jealous, suspecting the ca se. He makes her swear at the divorce proceedings that she wants to divorce him.

Sir Arthur Wellesley and Sir John Moore are in command of the English forces in Spain and Portugal. The French retreat at Vimiero and again at

Corun where Sir John Moore is killed and is hastily and surreptitiously buried nearby. With much loss and horror the English and German Hussars under Wellesley defeat the French at Talavera. Of the two remaining battles in Spain and Portugal in this part of the poem the lines of Torres Vedras in Portugal is by far the most important. Indeed it is the most important of all the battles, if it may be called a battle, in Spain or Portugal. Through Torres Vedras was the only way to reach Portugal by land and here Wellington laid strong fortifications controlling that entry completely. There were three insurmountable lines stretching from the mouth of the Zesambre to the Alhandra, and the base point Fort. S. Julian. The French realize the foolhardiness of attacking this fortification and retreat with scarcely a battle.

The other battle takes place in Spain at Albuera in May. Here the French, with great strategy, hide behind a hill near the right wing of the English army under Beresford without his even suspecting it. The battle rages wildly. The English are driven back and the French take the hill. Beresford rushes on and starts up the hill. The battle goes on between the two armies at speaking distance. The French capture many men and feel their battle won when suddenly out of the mist come Hardinge and his battalions on the top of the hill and the battle is won for the English.

Semichorus I of the Pities (aerial music)

They come, beset by riddling hail;
They sway like sedges in a gale;
They fail, and win, and win, and fail. Albuera!

Semichorus II

They gain the ground there, yard by yard,
Their brows and hair and lashes charred,
Their blackened teeth set firm and hard. Albuera!

Semichorus I

Their mad assailants rave and reel,
And face, as men who scorn to feel
The close-lined, three-edged prongs of steel. Albuera!

Semichorus II

Till faintness follows closing-in,
Then, faltering headlong down, they spin
Like leaves. But those pay well who win Albuera.

Semichorus I

Out of six thousand souls that sware
To hold the mount, or pass elsewhere,
But eighteen hundred muster there.

Semichorus II

Pale Colonels, Captains, ranksmen lie,
Facing the earth or facing sky:-
They strove to live, they stretch to die.

Semichorus I

Friends, foemen, mingle: heap and heap.-
Hide their hacked bones, Earth! -- deep, deep, deep,
Where harmless worms caress and creep.

Chorus

Hide their hacked bones, Earth!--deep, deep, deep,
Where harmless worms caress and creep.--
What man can grieve? what woman weep?
Better than waking is to sleep! Albuera! " (1)

About a year or so before these battles in Spain and Portugal Napoleon had grown impatient at Alexander's delay in giving his sister in marriage to Napoleon and after the defeat of the Austrians at Wagram made a plea for the Archduchess Maria Louisa of Austria, through the Metternichs.

The battle of Wagram was a surprising one to all but the French. They are encamped on a small island in the Danube. The Austrians believed

(1) The Dynasts Part II. pp. 301-302

they had the island so well guarded that the French could not leave it, but at night they all get ashore and onto the field of Wagram. The Austrian Emperor feels that his position is secure, however, with his sturdy and larger number, but Napoleon with extraordinary insight finds out the weakest parts of the Austrian force and advances upon them with a terrific charge and finally by dint of perseverence and his shining example, wins the day for the French.

As Walcheren is shown the chorus comes into play with these words:

Shade of the Earth

"What storm is this of souls dissolved in sighs,
And what the dingy doom it signifies?

Spirit of the Pities

We catch a lamentation shaped thus:

Chorus of Pities (aerial music)

"We who withstood the blasting blaze of war
When marshalled by the gallant Moore awhile,
Beheld the grazing death-bolt with a smile,
Closed combat edge to edge and bore to bore,
Now rot upon this Isle!

"The ever wan morass, the dune, the blear
Sandweed, and tepid pool, and putrid smell,
Emaciate purpose to a fractious fear,
Beckon the body to its last low cell--
A chink no chart will tell.

"O ancient Delta, where the fen-lights flit!
Ignoble sediment of loftier lands,
Thy humour clings about our hearts and hands
And solves us to its softness, till we sit
As we were part of it.

"Such force as fever leaves is maddened now,
With tidings trickling in from day to day
Of others' differing fortunes, wording how
They yield their lives to baulk a tyrant's sway--
Yield them not vainly, they!

"In champaigns green and purple, far and near,
In town and thorpe where quiet spire-cocks turn,
Through vales, by rocks, beside the brooding burn
And we pent pithless here!

"Here, where each creeping day the creeping file
Draws past with shouldered comrades score on score,
Bearing them to their lightless last asile,
Where weary wave-wails from the clammy shore
Will reach their ears no more.

"We might have fought, and had we died, died well,
Even if in dynasts' discords not our own:
Our death-spot some sad haunter might have shown,
Some tongue have asked our sires or sons to tell
The tale of how we fell:

"But such bechanced not. Like the mist we fade,
No lustrous lines engrave in story we,
Our country's chiefs, for their own fames afraid,
Will leave our names and fates by this pale sea
To perish silently! "

Spirit of the Years

Why must ye echo as mechanic mimes
These mortal minions' bootless cadences,
Played on the stops of their anatomy
As is the mewling music on the strings
Of yonder ship-masts by the unweeting wind,
Or the frail tune upon this withering sedge
That holds its papery blades against the gale?
--Men pass to dark corruption, at the best,
Ere I can count five score; these why not now?--
The Immanent Shaper builds Its beings so
Whether ye sigh their sighs with them or no! " (1)

In Austria, Metternich, the Prime Minister, informs the Emperor Francis of Napoleon's desire to wed his daughter. Francis decides to leave it entirely to his daughter. She is an ardent hater of Napoleon but realizes that the alliance might be a good one and agrees to marry him. Napoleon meets her at Courcelles and she is quite charmed with his gallantry and he with her beauty and gentle manner. He really falls

(1) The Dynasts, Part II. pp 251-253

in love with her though he had wanted her merely that she might give him a son.

Alexander is annoyed in turn that Napoleon should ignore him and take Marie Louisa, for the day that Austria capitulated so did Alexander. He had made Napoleon wait too long, however, and his offer was spurned. The Empress-Mother of Russia was the only one who was really pleased.

The Italian Cardinals did not attend the wedding of Napoleon and Maria Louisa which angered Napoleon greatly. His anger frightened the bride but it was soon forgotten.

Marie Louisa presents Napoleon with a fine baby boy at which there is so much rejoicing that Napoleon forgets for the time the sufferings and privations of his people from the closing of the ports to England.

Part Three begins with Napoleon's campaign with Russia where he drives back the Russians but suffers s ch privation and loss that he and his officers return to France after many months with not one soldier they had started out with. The Russians vacate Moscow but fire it after the French have gone to sleep forcing them to leave. They are cut off from provisions, winter is coming and they are constantly harried by small groups of Russian soldiers who are pursuing them until finally the whole French is devastated--a terrible victory, if it could be called that, for Napoleon. He immediately returns to France to prepare a new army.

In the meantime the French have again been suffering defeat in Spain and Portugal at the hands of the English. At Salamanca the French are forced to retreat, and would have been captured byt for the treachery of the Spaniards who break their promises to the English and assist the French

in escaping. Likewise on the Plain of Vitoria, the English defeat the French and even King Joseph of Spain is forced to flee, but all his important papers are captured by the English. ellington and his generals are feted at Vauxhall Gardens for this great victory.

Again Austria, Prussia and Russia form an alliance against France, royally subsidized by England under Castlereagh, her most successful Prime Minister during the Napoleonic wars.

Napoleon meets these three allies at Leipzig. His army is centered just outside the town, but the Allies are lined outside them and more in number. This battle is probably the most important of all the battles fought in these wars. The first night the battle is a "draw" and is called off for the night. By evening of the next day Napoleon realizes the only thing to do is to retreat. He rides into Leipzig to bid the King and Queen of Saxony good-bye and then escapes through a garden to the river bank. A great part of the French army is captured, but Napoleon himself reaches Paris safely. He learns that the Allies are marching on Paris so he leaves. He leaves his wife, Marie Louise, and his son in the care of some of his friends there. Later they go back to Austria where Marie Louise is so played upon as to become finally convinced that Napoleon should no longer be considered as a friend or husband to her. She never sees him again.

Meantime Napoleon is forced to abdicate and is made, instead, the Emperor of the little island of Elba. Napoleon attempts suicide but is thwarted. On the way to Elba he is greeted with insults and curses: everyone has turned against him.

At Elba he finds that he has several friends left and a plan is immediately put into action for his return to France. Through the negligence of his guard he does return to France and all along his way his old soldiers and commanders throw down the Bourbon plumage and again don the Bonapartist tri-color.

The news travels quickly and England, Russia, Austria and Prussia all prepare to assemble against the Emperor Napoleon. A decree is signed by all four powers that Napoleon is to be taken either dead or alive by whomsoever can accomplish it.

The famous ball of the Duchess of Richmond in Brussels on the eve of Waterloo is in full swing when word comes that already Napoleon has reached Quatre-Bras. The soldiers leave the ball but the officers remain as a feint to deceive Napoleon into thinking he is unsuspected. Consequently the armies are well on their way to Quatre-Bras before he realizes it. Both the French and Allied armies are in groups attacking at different points, planning to join finally. One of Napoleon's most important divisions gets lost and where Grouchy should be coming there suddenly appears the combined armies of Bulow and Blucher hard pressing on Napoleon's rear right flank. Ney's charges to the center of the English army fail. The battle waxes hot and furious for two days, both sides sustaining great losses. Finally the French army centers for an attack, but Blucher in the rear, with Wellington in the fore overcome the French and they flee in great disorder with Blucher pursuing. Napoleon, finally captured, is consigned to the Island of St. Helena where many felt he should have gone after his abdication, and from which there is no return.

The last we see of Napoleon is when he communes with himself and wonders whether all he had done and lived for was worth while after all.

And Hardy draws his final picture in the Overworld and of the "Immanent Will".

Spirit of the Years

Thus doth the Great Foresightless mechanize
In blank entrancement now as evermore
Its ceaseless artistries in Circumstance
Of curious stuff and braid, as just forthshown.
Yet but one flimsy riband of Its web
Have we here watched in weaving--web shorm,
Whose furthest hem and selvage may extend
To where the roars and plashings of the flames
Of earth-invisible suns swell noisily,
And onwards into ghastly gulfs of sky,
Where hideous presences churn through the dark--
Monsters of magnitude without a shape,
Hanging amid deep wells of nothingness.

Yet seems this vast and singular confection
Wherein our scenery glints of scantest size,
Inutile all--so far as reasonings tell.

Spirit of the Pities

Thou arguest still the Inadvertent Mind.--
But, even so, shall blankness be for aye?
Men gained cognition with the flux of time,
And wherefore not the Force informing them,
When far-ranged eons past all fathoming
Shall have swung by, and stand as backward years?

Spirit of the Years

What wouldst have hoped and had the Will to be?--
How wouldst have paeared It, if what hadst dreamed
Thereof were truth, and all my showings dream?

Spirit of the Pities

The Will that fed my hope was far from thine,
One I would thus have hymned eternally:--

Semichorus I of the Pities (aerial music)

To Thee whose eye all Nature owns
Who hurlest Dynasts from their thrones,
And liftest those of low estate
We sing, with Her men consecrate!

Semichorus II

Yea, Great and Good, Thee, Thee we hail,
Who shak'st the strong, Who shield'st the frail,
Who hadst not shaped such souls as we
If tender mercy lacked in Thee!

Semichorus I

Though times be when the mortal moan
Seems unascending to Thy throne,
Though seers do not as yet explain
Why Suffering sobs to Thee in vain:

Semichorus II

We hold that Thy unscanted scope
Affords a food for final Hope,
That mild-eyed Prescience ponders nigh
Life's loom, to lull it by-and-by.

Semichorus I

Therefore we quire to highest height
The Sellwiller, the kindly Sight
That balances the Vast for weal,
That purges as by wounds to heal.

Semichorus II

The systemed suns the skies enscroll
Obey Thee in their rhythmic roll,
Ride radiantly at Thy command,
Are darkened by Thy Masterhand!

Semichorus I

And these pale panting multitudes
Seen surging here, their moils, their moods,
All shall "fulfil their joy" in Thee
In Thee abide eternally!

Semichorus II

Exultant adoration give
The Alone, through whom all living live,
The Alone, in whom all dying die,
Whose means the End shall justify! Amen.

Spirit of the Pities

So did we evermore sublimely sing;
So would we now, despite thy forthshowing!

Spirit of the Years

Something of difference animates your quiring,
O half-convinced Compassionates and fond,
From chords consistent with our Spectacle!
You almost charm my long philosophy
Out of my strong-built thought, and bear me back
To when I thanksgave thus ... Ay, start not, Shades:
In the Foregone I knew what dreaming was,
And could let raptures rule! But not so now.

Semichorus I of the Years (aerial music)

O Immanence, That reasonest not
In putting forth all things begot,
Thou build'st Thy house in space--for what?

Semichorus II

O Loveless, Hateless! --past the sense
Of kindly eyed benevolence,
To what tune danceth this Immense?

Spirit Ironic

For one I cannot answer. But I know
Tis handsome of our Pities so to sing
The praises of the dreaming, dark, dumb Thing
That turns the handle of this idle Show!

As once a Greek asked I would fain ask too,
Who knows if all the Spectacle be true,
Or an illusion of the gods (the Will,
To wit) some hocus-pocus to fulfil?

Semichorus I of the Years (aerial music)

Last as first the question rings
Of the Will's long travailings:
Why the All-mover
Why the All-prover
Ever urges on and measures out the chordless
chime of Things.

Semichorus II

Heaving dumbly
As we deem
Moulding numbly
As in dream
Apprehending not how fare the sentient subjects of Its scheme.

Semichorus I of the Pities

Nay: -- shall not Its blindness break?
Yea, must not Its heart awake,
Promptly tending
To Its mending
In a genial germing purpose, and for loving-kindness' sake?

Semichorus II

Should It never
Curb or cure
Aught whatever
Those endure
Whom It quickens, let them darkle to extinction swift and sure.

Chorus

But--a stirring thrills the air
Like to sounds of joyance there
That the rages
Of the ages
Shall be cancelled, and deliverance offered from the darts
that were,
Consciousness the Will informing, till It fashion all things
fair!

(1) The Dynasts Part III. pp 521-525

CHAPTER V

THE POETRY OF THOMAS HARDY

Hardy always felt that there was no event too trivial or too great to find expression for, provided the expression was adapted to the circumstance. He endeavored at all times to use the exact word for the expression of every idea, and often used words which seemed at times to be almost uncouth, but after repeated readings that feeling changes to one of admiration for the strength and ruggedness of his poetry. He also ignored many of the usual metronomic rules and indulged in unheard of dissonances and rhythmic complexities. He was strongly opposed to sentimentalism in poetry and disliked the production of beautiful sounds merely for the sake of the sounds. To him, the sense and the sense only was all that should be considered. However, the music of his poetry is apparent if only in a secondary sense.

Perhaps Hardy was influenced to a certain extent by Barnes in this feeling for poetry, for in Barnes he mainly admired his aim at the closeness of the phrase to the vision and his breaking at times into sudden irregularities in his rhythm, though, as a rule, Barnes himself was usually smooth. Then, too, Hardy greatly admired the tinge of austerity in the Cavalier verse. Often Hardy would draw a picture and then proceed to describe it as closely as possible either in poetry or prose.

Another man whose influence upon Hardy was great was Leslie Stephen whom Hardy quotes in his diary: "The ultimate aim of the poet should be to touch our hearts by showing his own, and not to exhibit his learning

or his fine taste." (1)

Hardy ever enjoyed poetry more than prose. It was his secret ambition even in his youth. He always felt that the writing of verse was the finest way of learning how to manipulate words and develop construction even for the person who plans to write prose.

"I believe poetry to be the very essence of literature." (2)

- The first volume of poetry published by Hardy was Wessex Poems published in 1898. For a long time he had been preparing the poems that comprised this first volume of verse. They ranged from 1865 on, with many poems created in his later years.

"Neutral Tones" from this volume is an interesting poem. It expresses the memory of a striking but dreary landscape which called to mind a very bitter experience in his life. It expresses love as a tormentor and a deceiver, and further illustrates Hardy's plan of having the setting as similar as possible to the human situation.

"We stood by a pond that winter day,
And the sun was white, as though chidden of God,
And a few leaves lay on the starving sod,
They had fallen from an ash, and were gray.

Your eyes on me were as eyes that rove
Over tedious riddles solved years ago:
And some words played between us to and fro-
On which lost the more by our love.

The smile on your mouth was the deadest thing
Alive enough to have strength to die:
And a grin of bitterness swept thereby
Like an ominous bird awing ...

Since then, keen lessons that love deceives,
And wrings with wrong, have shaped to me
Your face and the God-curst sun, and a tree,
And a pond edged with grayish leaves." (3)

1. Later Years of Thomas Hardy, F.E.Hardy, p.147

2. Life of Hardy, Ernest Brennecke, p.5

3. Wessex Poems Hardy, Page 17.

"Heiress and Architect" presents a rather artificial situation and gives an impression of being unreal. The heiress is imbued with life and hope and enthusiasm, but the architect is bitter and filled with the disillusionment of life. (1)

About 1870 after Hardy met his wife-to-be, Emma Lavinia Gifford, under the stress of his emotion, he poured out love lyrics to her. One of the most appealing of these is "The Ditty" which is also an excellent example of the Barnes influence and is free from the usual sting of Hardy.

"Beneath a knap where flown
  Nestlings play,
Within walls of weathered stone,
  Far away
From the files of formal houses,
By the bough the firstling browses,
Lives a sweet; no merchants meet
No man barters, no man sells
  Where she dwells

Upon that fabric fair
  "Here is she!"
Seems written everywhere
  Unto me.
But to friends and nodding neighbors,
Fellow wights in lot and labors,
Who descry the times as I,
No such lucid legend tells
  Where she dwells.

Should I lapse to what I was
  In days by,
(Such cannot be, but because
  Some loves die
Let me feign it)- none would notice
That where she I know by rote is
Spread a strange and withering change,
Like a drying of the wells
  Where she dwells.

To feel I might have kissed-
Love as true--
Otherwhere, nor Mine have missed
My life through,
Had I never wandered near her,
Is a smart severe-severer
In the thought that she is nought,
Even as I, beyond the dells
Where she dwells.

And Devotion droops her glance
To recall
That bond servants of Chance
We are all.
I but found her in that, going
On my errant path unknowing,
I did not out-skirt the spot
That no spot on earth excels-
Where she dwells! (1)

"Amabel", written in 1865 shows the influence of Tennyson, though it is somewhat colder than Tennyson. This poem is one of the few links between Hardy and the Victorian Age. It is more sentimental than Hardy usually is, lamenting the death of love through changing circumstances. It shows love as an objective force rather than a subjective emotion, a universal thing ruled by universal laws. It seems to be similar to the theory of Schopenhauer that love is really the working of the Immanent Will for the preservation of the race.

"I marked her ruined hues,
Her custom-straitened views,
And asked, "Can there indwell
My Amabel?"

I looked upon her gown,
Once rose, now earthen brown;
The change was like the knell
Of Amabel.

Her step's mechanic ways
Had lost the life of May's;
Her laugh, once sweet in swell,
Spoilt Amabel.

(1) Wessex Poems, Hardy, p. 37

I mused: "Who sings the strain
I sang ere warmth did wane?
Who thinks its numbers spell
His Amabel?"--

Knowing that, though Love cease,
Love's race shows undecrease,
All find in dorp or dell
An Amabel.

I felt that I could creep
To some housetop and weep,
That time, the tyrant fell
Ruled Amabel!

I said (the while I sighed
That love like ours had died),
"Fond things I'll no more tell
To Amabel,

"But leave her to her fate,
And fling across the gate,
'Till the Last Trump, farewell,
O Amabel! " (1)

The poem "Hap" written in 1866 sounds the main characteristic of Hardy's work, especially in his earlier writing. It develops the idea of the unkindness of chance and circumstance, and the main force of the world as an indifferent impersonality rather than a real deity or even deities. Perhaps, if he could only have felt that there was some omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent being ruling the universe, he might have been happier in this poem.

If but some vengeful god would call to me
From up the sky and laugh: "Thou suffering thing,
Know that thy sorrow is my ecstacy,
That thy loss is my hate's profiting!"

Then would I bear, and clench myself, and die,
Steeled by the sense of ire unmerited:
Half-eased, too, that a Power fuller than I
Had willed and meted me the tears I shed.

(1) Ibid. p. 4.

6

6

But not so. How arrives it joy lies slain,
And why unblooms the best hope ever sown?
Crass casualty obstructs the sun and rain,
And dicing time for gladness casts a moan...
These purblind Doomsters had as readily strown
Blisses about my pilgrimage as pain. (1)

"In Vision I Roamed" shows an attempted largeness of the world view, and is, perhaps the first step toward the general "bigness" of The Dynasts.

In vision I roamed the flashing Firmament,
So fierce in blazon that the night waxed wan,
As though with an awed sense of such ostent;
And as I thought my spirit ranged on and on

In footless traverse through ghast heights of sky,
To the last chambers of the monstrous Dome,
Where stars the brightest here to darkness die:
Then any spot on our own Earth seemed Home!

And the sick grief that you were far away
Grew pleasant thankfulness that you were near,
Who might have been, set on some outstep sphere,
Less than a want to me, as day by day
I lived unware, uncaring all that lay
Locked in that universe taciturn and drear. (2)

"Confession to a Friend in Trouble" is a psychological poem, trying to get at a half-hidden moral. This is, perhaps, an example of his struggle against a total loss of faith in human nature.

Your troubles shrink not though I feel them less
Here, far awa, than when I tarried near:
I even smile old smiles-with listlessness-
Yet smiles they are, not ghastly mockeries mere.

A thought too strange to house within my brain
Haunting its outer precincts I discern:
That I will not show zeal again to learn
Your griefs, and, sharing them, renew my pain .....

It goes, like murky bird or buccaneer
That shapes its lawless figure on the main,
And each new impulse tends to make outflee
The unseemly instinct that had lodgement there,
Yet, comrade old, can bitterer knowledge be
Than that, though banned, such instinct was in me! (3)

(1) Ibid. p. 7
(2) Ibid. p. 9
(3) Ibid. p. 15

"Revulsion" shows the essence of Hardy's early pessimism in that no phase of life was really worth the living because of the pain and unhappiness found in living it. He shows, in this poem, an utter disillusionment of love, feeling that it is only a tormenter and disturber in the guise of alluring woman.

> Though I waste watches framing words to fetter
> Some spirit to my own in clasp and kiss,
> Out of the night there looms a sense 'twere better
> To fail obtaining whom one fails to miss.
>
> For winning love we win the risk of losing,
> And losing love is as one's life were riven;
> It cuts like contumely and keen ill-using
> To cede what was superfluously given.
>
> Let me then feel no more the fateful thrilling
> That devastates the love-worn wooer's frame,
> The hot ado of fevered hopes, the chilling
> That agonizes disappointed aim!
> So may I live, no junctive law fulfilling,
> And my heart's table bear no woman's name. (1)

"Leipzig" refers to the Napoleonic wars, and the idea was later incorporated in The Dynasts. This poem shows great dramatic treatment. (2)

"The Peasant's Confession" is of the Homeric or Aeschylean style in its grand handling of the noted fallen. This poem, too, anticipates The Dynasts. There is a great deal of speed and broken rhythm in the verses. (3)

In his war poems Hardy shows that he was well aware of their spectacular possibilities. He realized, too, that war was an essentially tragic phenomena, and knew the feeling of sorrow that comes after the abnormal excitement of war has worn off. He always longed for more peaceful policies.

There are two of the many fine poems in this volume which it would

(1) Ibid. p. 25
(2) Ibid. p. 62
(3) Ibid. p. 74

be well to mention: "The Two Men", which gives an ironic comment on life;(1) and "The Fire at Tranter Sweatley's" or "The Bride-Night Fire".(2) This latter poem is an example of the direct influence of Barnes. The speech is the more exact Dorset speech of Barnes and is a typical incident of the rustic Dorset life.

The next volume of Poetry completed by Hardy was Poems Past and Present published in 1901. There are many fine poems in this volume but there is one in particular that is well worth mentioning; "The Church-Builder". This is a narrative poem of a young architect who gave everything he had to build a beautiful temple for the Lord and for the people to the more wholeheartedly worship the Lord. When he had finished he felt that all should go well with him for having done his duty at so much sacrifice to himself, but Hardy's careless fate sweeps on and brings this youth to a disillusioned and ironic end in the very church he had toiled so to erect.

The church flings forth a battled shade
  Over the moon-blanched sward;
The church; my gift; whereto I paid
  My all in hand and hoard;
  Lavished my gains
  With stintless pains
To glorify the Lord.

I squared the broad foundations in
  Of ashlared masonry;
I moulded mullions thick and thin,
  Hewed fillet and ogee;
  I circleted
  Each sculptored head
With nimb and canopy.

I called in many a craftsmaster
  To fix emblazoned glass,
To figure Cross and Sepulchre
  On dossal, boss and brass.
  My gold all spent,
  My jewels went
To gem the cups of Mass.

(1) Ibid. p. 200
(2) Ibid. p. 185

I borrowed deep to carve the screen
    And raise the ivoried Rood;
I parted with my small demesne
    To make my owings good.
    Heirlooms unpriced
    I sacrificed
Until debt-free I stood.

So closed the task. "Deathless the Creed
    Here substanced!" said my soul;
"I heard me bidden to this deed,
    And straight obeyed the call.
    Illume this fane
    That not in vain
I build it, Lord of all!"

But, as it chanced me, then and there
    Did dire misfortunes burst;
My home went waste for lack of care,
    My sons rebelled and curst;
    Till I confessed
    That aims the best
Were looking like the worst.

Unkindled by my votive work
    No burning faith I find;
The deeper thinkers sneer and smirk,
    And give my toil no mind;
    From nod and wink
    I read they think
That I am fool and blind.

My gift to God seems futile, quite;
    The world moves as erstwhile;
And powerful Wrong on feeble Right
    Tramples in olden style.
    My faith burns down,
    I see no crown;
But Cares and Grief and Guile.

So now the remedy? Yea, this:
    I gently swing the door
Here of my fane-no soul to wis-
    And cross the patterned floor
    To the rood-screen
    That stands between
The nave and inner chore.

The rich red windows dim the moon,
But little light need I;
I mount the prie-dieu, lately hewn
From woods of rarest die;
Then from below
My garment, so,
I draw this cord, and tie

One end thereof around the beam
Midway 'twixt Cross and truss;
I noose the nethermost extreme,
And in ten seconds thus
I journey hence-
To that land whence
No rumor reaches us.

Well, here at morn they'll light on one
Dangling in mockery
Of what he spent his substance on
Blindly and uselessly!....
"He might", they'll say,
"Have built some way,
A cheaper gallows-tree! " (1)

In 1909 Time's Laughingstocks was published. Of the love lyrics in this volume there are several that I wish particularly to mention. "Her Definition" written in 1866 is a very lovely, pure lyric.

I lingered through the night to break of day,
Nor once did sleep extend a wing to me,
Intently busied with a vast array
Of epithets that should outfigure thee.

Full-featured terms, all fitless, hastened by,
And this sole speech remained: "That maiden mine!"
Debarred from due description then did I
Perceive the indefinite phrase could yet define.

As common chests encasing wares of price
Are borne with tenderness through halls of state
For what they cover, so the poor device
Of homely wording I could tolerate,
Knowing its unadornment held as freight
The sweetest image outside Paradise. 1866 (2)

(1) Poems Past and Present (Collected Poems of Thomas Hardy) p. 156
(2) Time's Laughing Stocks Hardy, p. 54

The next two poems, while of a fine lyric quality are not the pure love lyric that this first one is. In these two poems there is the element of disillusionment so common to Hardy. These two poems are "At Waking" (1) and "The Dawn After the Dance" (2).

"The Minute Before Meeting" is a lyric similar to the amorous verses of the Elizabethan Age.

> The grey gaunt days dividing us in twain
> Seemed hopeless hills my strength must fain to climb,
> But they are gone; and now I would detain
> The few clock beats that part us; rein back time,
>
> And live in close expectance never closed
> In change for far expectance closed at last
> So harshly has expectance been imposed
> On my long need while these slow blank months passed.
>
> And knowing that what is now about to be
> Will all have been in O, so short a space!
> I read beyond it my despondency
> When more dividing months shall take its place,
> Thereby denying to this hour of grace
> A fullup measure of felicity. (3)

"A Young Man's Epigram on Existence" is a short and quite humorous bit of verse which might be said to illustrate the youthful disillusionment so often found in Hardy's early verse, but it seems too small a rhyme to carry so heavy a burden. Could it not be a sample of Hardy's humor?

> A senseless school, where we must give
> Our lives that we may learn to live!
> A dolt is he who memorizes
> Lessons that leave no time for prizes. 1866. (4)

Satires of Circumstance was published in 1914 and gives an unequalled

(1) Time's Laughing Stocks Hardy p. 61
(2) Ibid. p. 74
(3) Ibid. p. 96
(4) Ibid. p. 208

effect of the tragic pity and horror in Hardy. Of these poems there is one that is really poor, "The Coronation" (1). It is too long to be quoted here, and is not worth the reading.

"The Convergence of the Twain" shows the Immanent Will as the prime urger of all things. This idea definitely changes from Hardy's earlier conception of Time and Chance as the agents of Destiny. (2) "The Phantom Horsewoman" and "The Spell of the Rose" offer an interesting contrast. The former is rich in imagination and illustrates the poet's trancendental tendencies. The latter is an allegory in contrast to the former.

The Phantom Horsewoman

Queer are the ways of a man I know:
He comes and stands
In a careworn craze
And looks at the sands
And the seaward haze
With moveless hands
And face and gaze,
Then turns to go ..
And what does he see when he gazes so?

They say he sees as an instant thing
More clear than today
A sweet soft scene
That once was in play
By that briny green;
Yes, notes alway
Warm, real and keen
That his back years bring-
A phantom of his own figuring.

Of this vision of his they might say more;
Not only there
Does he see this sight,
But everywhere
In his brain--day, night,
As if on the air
It were drawn rose bright-
Yea, far from that shore
Does he carry this vision of heretofore:

1. Satires of Circumstance ,(Collected Poems) p.751
2. Ibid. p.788

A ghost-girl rider. And though, toil-tried,
He withers daily,
Time touches her not,
But she still rides gaily
In his rapt thought
On that shagged and shaly
Atlantic spot
And as when first eyed
Draws rein and sings to the swing of the tide. (1)

The Spell of the Rose

"I mean to build a hall anon,
And shape two turrets there,
And a broad newelled stair,
And a cool well for crystal water;
Yes, I will build a hall anon,
Plant roses love shall feed upon
And apple trees and pear."

He set to build the manor hall,
And shaped the turrets there,
And the broad newelled stair,
And the cool well for crystal water;
He built for me that manor-hall,
And planted many trees withal,
But no rose anywhere.

And as he planted never a rose
That bears the flower of love
Though other flowers throve
Some heart-bane moved our souls to sever
Since he had planted never a rose;
And misconceits raised horrid shows,
And agonies came thereof.

"I'll mend these miseries", then said I,
And so, at dead of night,
I went and, screened from sight,
That nought should keep our souls in severance,
I set a rose bush. "This", said I
"May end divisions dire and wry,
And long-drawn days of blight."

But I was called from earth--yea, called
Before my rose bush grew;
And would that now I knew
What feels he of the tree I planted,
And whether, after I was called
To be a ghost, he, as of old,
Gave me his heart anew!

(1) Ibid. p. 332

Perhaps now blooms that queen of trees
I set but saw not grow,
And he, beside its glow-
Eyes couched of the misvision that blurred me-
Ay, there beside that queen of trees
He sees me as I was, though sees
Too late to tell me so! (1)

"The Voice" is a poem that expresses more real emotion than most of Hardy's poems. It comes closer than any other poem to the point of overflowing.

Woman much missed, how you callto me, call to me,
Saying that now you are not as you were
When you had changed from the one who was all to me,
But as at first, when our day was fair.

Can it be you that I hear? Let me view you then,
Standing as when I drew near to the town
Where you would wait for me; yes, as I knew you then
Even to the original air-blue gown!

Or is it only the breeze, in its listlessness
Travelling across the wet mead to me here,
You being ever dissolved to wan wistlessness
Heard no more again far or near?

Thus I; faltering froward,
Leaves around me falling,
Wind oozing thin through the thorn from norward,
And the woman calling. (2)

"A Circular" is another fine poem, but a rather cold one.

As "legal representative"
I read a missive not my own,
On new designs the senders give
For clothes, in tints as shown.

Here figure blouses, gowns for tea,
And presentation-trains of state,
Charming ball-dresses, millinery,
Warranted up to date.

And this gay-pictured, spring-time shout
Of fasion, hails what lady proud?
Her who before last year ebbed out
Was costumed in a shroud. (3)

(1) Ibid. p. 334
(2) Ibid. p. 325
(3) Ibid. p. 327

Moments of Vision, 1917, is greater in the beauty, in imagination, in the maturity of the thought content, and in the perfection of the form than any of the other volumes of poetry. In this volume Hardy achieved the close adaptation of language and form to the idea or incident expressed for which he had been striving.

The next three poems I am about to quote refer to Hardy's first wife, Emma Lavinia Gifford, and were written after her death, When Hardy visited the old scenes, though, the first two poems in particular, were reconstructed from some old notes of his referring to the times when they had been together and what they had done.

The Figure in the Scene

It pleased her to step in front and sit
There the cragged slope was green,
While I stood back that I might pencil it
With her amid the scene.
Till it gloomed rained;
But I kept on, despite the drifting wet
That fell and stained
My draught, leaving for curious quizzings yet
The blots engrained.

And thus I drew her there alone
Seated amid the gauze
Of moisture, hooded, only her outline shown,
With rain-lines marked across.
Soon passed our stay;
Yet her rainy form is the genius still of the spot,
Immutable, yea,
Though the place now knows her no more, and has known her not
Ever since that day. (1)

Why Did I Sketch

Why did I sketch an upland green,
And put the figure in
Of one on the spot with me?--
For now that one has ceased to be seen
The picture waxes akin
To a wordless irony

(1) Moments of Vision p. 98

If you go drawing on down or cliff
Let no soft curves intrude
Of a woman's silhouette,
But show the escarpments stark and stiff
As in utter solitude;
So shall you forget.

Let me sooner pass from sight of the sky
Than again on a thoughtless day
Sketch, laugh and sing, and rhyme
With a woman sitting near whom I
Paint for love, and who may
Be called hence in my time! (1)

It Never Looks Like Summer

" It never looks like summer here
On Beeny by the sea."
But though to her its look was drear,
Summer it seemed to me.

It never looks like summer now
Whatever weather's there;
But then, it cannot anyhow,
On Beeny or elsewhere! (2)

"The Last Performance" is a rather pathetic poem which relates to a few weeks before the death of the first Mrs. Hardy, when she sat down at the piano and played for her husband every piece she had ever known and said then that she would never play again, nor did she.

"I am playing my oldest tunes", declared she,
"All the old tunes I know,-
Those I learnt ever so long ago."
Why she should think just then she'd play them
Silence cloaks like snow.

When I returned from the town at nightfall
Notes continued to pur
As when I had left two hours before:
"It's the very last time", she said in closing;
"From now I play no more".

(1) Moments of Vision Hardy, p. 99
(2) Ibid. p. 162

A few morns onward found her fading,
And, as her life outflew,
I thought of her playing her tunes right through;
And I felt she had known of what was coming,
And wondered how she knew. (2)

The four succeeding poems from this volume are of war, a subject in which Hardy was much interested.

"Men Who March Away" (1) is a song of the soldiers and expresses a bitterness against time that they must leave all that is dear to them, and yet going with a certain pride that they are doing their duty and will be rewarded for it in some way.

"His Country" expresses a transcendental view of patriotism.

I journeyed from my native spot
Across the south sea shine
And found that people in hall and cot
Labored and suffered each his lot
Even as I did mine.

Thus noting them in meads and marts
It did not seem to me
That my dear country with its hearts,
Mind, yearnings, worse and better parts,
Had ended with the sea.

I further and further went anon,
As such I still surveyed,
And further yet--yea, on and on,
And all the men I looked upon
Had heart-strings fellow-made.

I traced the whole terrestrial round,
Homing the other side;
Then said I "What is there to bound
My denizenship? It seems I have found
Its scope to be world wide."

I asked me, "Whom have I to fight,
And whom have I to spare,
And whom to weaken, crush and blight?
My country seems to have kept in sight
On my way everywhere."

He travels
southward,
and looks
around;

and cannot
discover
the boundary

of his
native
country;

or where
his duties
to his fellow-
creatures end;

nor who
are his
enemies

(1) Collected Poems p. 506
(2) Moments of Vision p. 119

"Ah, you deceive you by such pleas!"
Said one with pitying eye.
"Foreigners, not like us, are these;
Stretch country-love beyond the seas?
Too Christian!" "Strange", said I.
But he is
set right
by a wise
man who pities
his blindness.
1913. (1)

When Hardy wrote "In The Time of The Breaking of the Nations" he was struck by seeing an old horse plowing the arable field, and then thought of it later as the scene of a bloody battle.

Only a man harrowing clods
In a slow silent walk
With an old horse that stumbles and nods
Half asleep as they stalk.

Only thin smoke without flame
From the heaps of couch grass;
Yet this will go onward the same
Though Dynasties pass.

Yonder a maid and her wight
Come whispering by;
War's annals will cloud into night
Ere their story die. (2) 1915.

"Then and Now" expresses Hardy's utter dislike of the methods of modern warefare.

When battles were fought
With a chivalrous sense of Should and Ought,
In spirit men said,
"End we quick or dead,
Honour is some reward!
Let us fight fair, for own own best or worst;
Go, Gentlemen of the Guard,
Fire first!"

In the open they stood,
Man to man in his knightlihood:
They would not deign
To profit by a stain
On the honourable rules,
Knowing that practise perfidy no man durst
Who in the heroic schools
Was nurst.

(1) Ibid. p. 225
(2) Ibid. p. 232

But, now, behold, what
Is warfare wherein honour is nought!
Rama laments
Its dead innocents:
Herod breathes: "My slaughter
Shall rule! Let us, by modes once called accurst,
Overhead, under water,
Stab first." (1) 1915

The last volume of poetry that we are going to discuss is Late Lyrics and Earlier published in 1922. More than half of these poems were written late in the author's life, but some of them were written from old manuscripts. The one poem to be quoted here from this volume is one of these old ones. "A Man Was Drawing Near to Me" relates to Hardy's arrival in Cornwall to reconstruct the church there.

On that grey night of mournful drone,
Apart from aught to hear, to see,
I dreamt not that from shires unknown
In gloom, alone,
By Halworthy,
A man was drawing near to me.

I'd no concern at anything,
No sense of coming pull-heart play:
Yet, under the silent outspreading
Of even's wing
Where Otterham lay,
A man was riding up my way.

I thought of nobody, not of one,
But only of trifles, legends, ghosts,
Though, on the moorland dim and dun
That travellers shun
About these coasts,
The man had passed Tresparret Posts.

There was no light at all inland,
Only the seaward pharos-fire,
Nothing to let me understand
That hard at hand
By Hennett Byre
The man was getting nigh and nigher.

(1) Ibid. p. 238

There was a rumble at the door
A draught disturbed the drapery
And but a minute passed before,
    With gaze that bore
    My destiny,
The man revealed himself to me. (1)

(1) Late Lyrics and Earlier (Collected Poems) p. 549

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

From his early youth Hardy's experience tended to develop in him the painstaking care and planning that preceeded all his efforts at artistic production.

Every poem, every novel, in fact, every idea that went to make up his great work was mulled over in his mind for a long time before it was given to the world. The basic ideas of many of his novels were first expressed in poetry, or a short story, before they were incorporated in the final whole. Many times he drew the actual picture of a scene or incident before he even thought of putting it in the form of a word picture. After reading his novels and his two poetic dramas, it is easy to find among his verse many such poems, or series of poems, that show how long he fostered an idea before it was consummated. The Dynasts, is perhaps the greatest example of this. Many, many years elapsed between the first thought of such an epic drama and its publication. Likewise many poems and stories appeared covering various phases of this gigantic topic ere the realization of his plan. Hence, we have in The Dynasts the culmination of all his work and planning. And so, in a lesser degree are his other greatest productions a culmination of a lesser period of scheming and working.

He studied his characters minutely, analyzing their every feeling

and impulse. He dissected them as a scientist, but mourned, as a fellow-being their unhappy fate. Every place he described, every situation in which he put a character, perfectly complemented the happiness or misery of the experience. The actual surroundings worked against the characters in spite of themselves, as did Hardy's early environment, especially, work on him.

To a casual reader it might seem that Hardy was not interested in moral issues beyond making a story of them, but such is not the case. He was thoroughly cognizant of the deepest problems life could hold, and so, with the touch of an aesthete, he succeeded in giving the most serious advice on all fundamental needs.

"At the conclusion we, after giving ourselves up in enjoyment, apprehend the metaphysic dominating the whole, a perfect congruence of the rhythm of seen things with an imagined rhythm of unseen reality." (1)

During his life Hardy was called a Nonconformist, an Agnostic, an Atheist, an Infidel, a Pessimist, an Immoralist and a Heretic, but he was never called "churchy". Yet, throughout his life, Hardy had always recognized the power of the parson for good and evil and had demonstrated the parson as such in his literary efforts. Hardy, himself, had dreamed, as a youth, of being a parson and had even thought of taking Orders. (1) His course in life made this impracticable, but he always retained his fervent interest in religion. It does not seem, perhaps, that he was impressed with religion, as

(1) Thomas Hardy--A Critical Study, Lascelles Abercrombie, p. 16

the average person views it; but it was without a doubt a most poignant problem to him, which he probably never settled to his own complete satisfaction. His writings, especially his poetry, are a record of his spirit-searchings in the realm of religion and philosophy.

Some people may say that Hardy has exaggerated his situations and made them too bleak to be real, but I feel that the exaggeration, if there is any, merely drives home a stronger lesson to us and say, with Mr. Brennecke, that "Hardy has in his creative work achieved such an epic-sweep, has so masterfully welded together observation, passion and form, that he has become perhaps the outstanding literary figure of his time." (1)

(1) Life of Thomas Hardy Ernest Brennecke, pp. 1-2

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